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# Veritas







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# Veritas

## ARSOF in the KOREAN WAR: Part VII

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# The Azimuth of the USASOC History Office



This 25<sup>th</sup> edition of *Veritas* will complete what turned into a seven issue series on Army SOF during the Korean War, 1950-1953. The series coincided with the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of 'The Forgotten War.' Relying heavily on primary sources we were able to make sense out of what SOF was doing and identify who the major players were by functional area. Though some mirrors got broken in the process of clearing the 'smoke' of ARSOF mythology, the *Veritas* publication team was recognized by the Secretary of the Army with two prestigious awards.

The History Office had the 'lead' for three historical displays in the USASOC headquarters building (E-2929). The first was centered around a large, leather-bound official War Diary of the British 22 Special Air Service (SAS) in WWII. Gifted by Mr. John McCrane, the exhibit is now in the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare School Marquat Library to benefit students in residence. The second is a sixteen-foot-long by four-foot-tall illustrated ARSOF history 'Time Line' (WWI to 2010) that is displayed on the wall opposite the Heritage Auditorium. The third, in progress, in the headquarters entrance atrium, pairs historical pictorial panels [all ARSOF functions (Special Forces, Rangers, Civil Affairs, et. al.)] with artifacts from USAJFKSWCS Museum. Timely support from DCS, Contracting and DCS, Engineer made these possible.

Here's the impact of **Sequestration**. Overtime (OT) ended months ago. Compensatory Time is covered in conjunction with

TDY, but mission criticality is determined by the command group. Telephone interviews are now the norm. A one-day a week furlough started 8 July and ended 16 August. This meant a 32-hour-week (8 AM to 5 PM EDST) for 6 weeks; working on a furlough day was *Verboten*. Half of the History staff was off Mondays; the other, on Fridays. *Veritas* will be produced and projects will get done, but not as quickly. There has been a civilian hiring freeze for more than three years. OT formerly covered our two vacancies. Most of the civilians retiring are not being replaced.

*A special thanks to the veterans and families for supporting our research efforts. The next Veritas will be a 'spectrum' issue covering all functional areas (WWII to the present). It will be followed by a special edition explaining current ARSOF operations in Pacific Command. CHB*



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An aerial photograph of a battlefield, showing a large pile of spent bullet casings in the foreground and various pieces of military equipment, including what appears to be a machine gun, in the background. The scene is set in a dry, open area.

# CLOSING ACTS

## The Special Warfare Campaign at the End of the Korean War

By Kenneth Finlayson

The Korean War (1950-1953) was a watershed event in the history of United States Army special operations. The Army had to recreate its special operations capability that was dismantled after World War II. It rejuvenated a moribund psychological warfare capacity and established the Psychological Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, NC, which was responsible for activating the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (SFG). In theater, the Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) organized, trained and equipped thousands of North Korean anti-Communists under its guerrilla command, coordinated the battle space with the fledgling Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and, late in the war, employed Special Forces-trained soldiers as advisors to the indigenous units. This issue of *Veritas*, the seventh devoted to Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) in the Korean War, examines those elements that contributed to the special warfare campaign in the latter stages of the war. The birth of modern ARSOF dates to the Korean War.

After the Chinese intervention in November 1950, the significant numbers of anti-Communist North Korean guerrillas on the islands off the northwest coast attracted the attention of the EUSA and the Far East Command (FEC). In order to effectively employ the disparate units, EUSA formed a guerrilla command, initially as a G-3 staff section.<sup>1</sup> As the war progressed towards a negotiated cease-fire, the guerrilla command went through a continuous series of organizational and leadership changes. Eventually, FEC put the guerrilla command under the operational control of the G-2.

### *Army Guerrilla Command*

"Army Guerrilla Command, Part II," examines the effort to train and employ the guerrillas under the constraints imposed by the Armistice negotiations. It traces the frequent 'command' name changes. The article culminates in an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the EUSA and FEC efforts to command and control the guerrillas on both coasts and gives an appraisal of their impact on the war effort.

### *Culture, Language & Special Ops*

A separate article highlights the exploits of Chinese-American Major (MAJ) Jack T. Young who recruited and trained Chinese and North Korean defectors in order to incorporate them into the special operations campaign.<sup>2</sup> MAJ Young's service demonstrated how important language skills and cultural awareness were to working effectively with indigenous forces. Both the Army and CIA sought men like Young for their special missions. Service and Agency operations had to be closely coordinated to avoid wasting scarce delivery assets. Far East Command formed two headquarters to 'manage' special operations in theater.

### *CCRAK*

The Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK) was formed within FEC to gain control of all guerrilla operations being conducted in theater. Since CCRAK never had command authority over any of the various special warfare elements in Korea, it did not create a special warfare campaign. In the absence of command direction, the American tactical advisors continued to run the day-to-day operations of the guerrilla command.

Inserting intelligence agents in Communist-controlled territory and providing an effective air rescue capability were beyond the capacity of the organization. "CCRAK: Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea," looks at the formation, mission, and problems associated with this star-crossed 'staff command.' Accompanying the main article is a brief essay on the CCRAK "Navy," based on photographs of the various vessels used. Simultaneously, the CIA formed the Joint Activities Commission, Korea (JACK). The CIA took a different approach to consolidating its intelligence and paramilitary operations under one office in Korea.

### *JACK and CIA Paramilitary Operations*

JACK was made functional by the American servicemen detailed to the CIA. Nominally a subordinate of CCRAK,



JACK had no requirement other than to coordinate with the toothless CCRAK. MAJ John K. Singlaub, detailed as the Deputy Commander, JACK, noted, "CCRAK was really a paper command. It was a rival for personnel, funding, air support, and above all, mission authorization."<sup>3</sup> A series of articles will cover the CIA paramilitary operations from 1950-1951 and JACK activities from 1951 to 1953, including maritime raiding and JACK air operations.

Soviet sea mines provided to North Korea were a strategic weapon that threatened the UN naval blockade. They became a CIA target. U.S. Army and Navy personnel were used in Agency-directed operations against the North Korean mine-laying operations, principally on the east coast. JACK also directed the air rescue effort there.

UN pilots flying missions over North Korea, particularly those engaged over 'MiG Alley' in the northeast corner of the country, made every attempt to reach the coast if their aircraft was damaged. Because the CIA was unable to establish a means of recovering pilots downed in the interior of North Korea, Far East Air Forces (FEAF) developed an air rescue system along the coast using Navy and Air Force H-5 helicopters, some flying off of converted LSTs (Landing Ship-Tank). Combined with amphibious aircraft and boats, FEAF provided the best chance for recovering a downed pilot who reached the sea. Later JACK operations coincided with the arrival of the first Special Forces (SF) soldiers in theater, three months before the Armistice.

### *SF in Korea*

In the spring of 1953, the first levy of what would ultimately be ninety-nine Special Forces-trained officers and non-commissioned officers began arriving in Korea. The SF troops worked as guerrilla advisors, supported air rescue operations, and as part of the Tactical Liaison Office (TLO), inserted intelligence agents in front of each infantry division.<sup>4</sup> Arriving in the final stages of the war, the Special Forces personnel were especially tested with the demobilization of the guerrilla forces. Some of them were instrumental in the incorporation of the guerrillas into the South Korean Army after the Armistice.

Thus, the Korean War was a catalyst for modern Army special operations. In the course of the war, virtually every special operations element today was introduced. Ranger units were resurrected after their deactivation at the end of World War II and a Ranger Training Center was established at Fort Benning, GA. Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations were reborn for Korea and Cold War Europe. The Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, NC trained Psywarriors and Special Forces. By the time the war ended, the 10<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group had relocated to Bad Tolz, Germany and the 77<sup>th</sup> SFG was activated at Fort Bragg.

This seventh issue of *Veritas* on ARSOF in Korea concludes the series. The scope and complexity of the special operations campaign, the absence of well-documented ARSOF history, and the generosity of our Korean War veterans instilled 'life' into the articles. This was a seminal study. It took as long to write about the ARSOF role as it did to fight the war. ♣



First Lieutenant Paul A. Christiansen was an infantry officer deployed as an advisor in the guerrilla command. Here he instructs a guerrilla wielding a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR).



U.S. Navy Sikorsky HO4S-1 from Helicopter Utility Squadron 1 landing on the carrier USS *Philippine Sea* (CV-47) after rescuing a downed pilot in 1951. The Navy also installed a helicopter pad on a Landing Ship-Tank (LST) that allowed the launch and recovery of air rescue helicopters from locations close in-shore.

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*Kenneth Finlayson is the USASOC Deputy Command Historian. He earned his PhD from the University of Maine, and is a retired Army officer. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, special operations aviation, and World War II special operations units.*

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### Endnotes

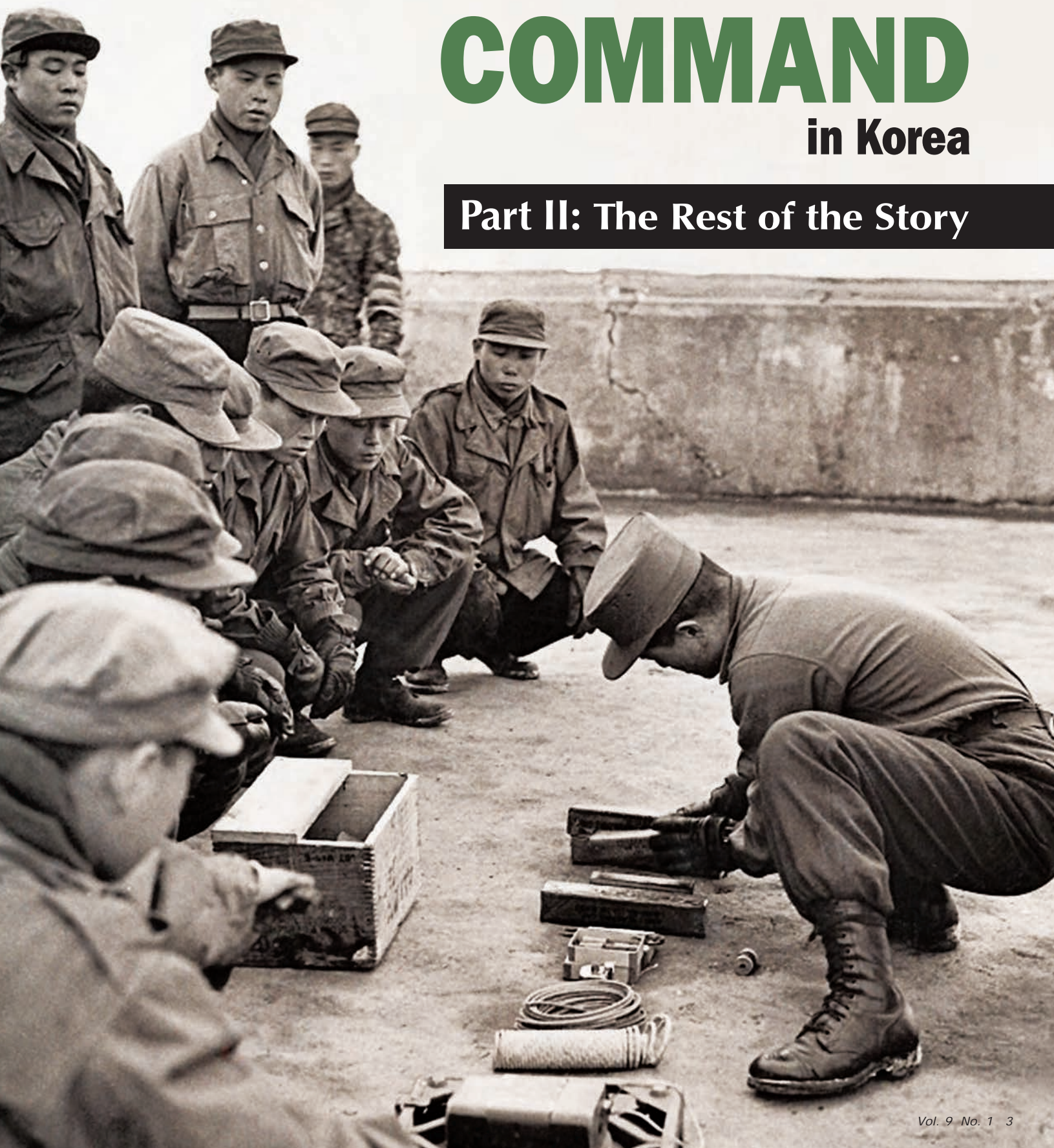
- 1 Michael E. Krivdo, "Creating an Army Guerrilla Command: Part One: The First Six Months," *Veritas: ARSOF in the Korea War, Part IV*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2012, 12-26.
- 2 MAJ Young, as assistant G-2 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, formed and led the Ivanhoe Security Force during the capture of the North Korean capital of P'yongyang in October 1950. Charles H. Briscoe, "The Ivanhoe Security Force in Korea, 1950," *Veritas*, Vol 6, No. 1, 2010, 83-99.
- 3 Charles H. Briscoe, "Soldier-Sailors in Korea: JACK Maritime Operations," *Veritas*, Vol 2, No. 2, 2006, 12-25. Major General Singlaub's illustrious career in special operations began in the Office of Strategic Services in World War II, and included assignments in China, Korea, as the Commander of MACV-SOG in Vietnam and concluded with his assignment as Chief of Staff of United Nations Forces, Korea and U.S. Forces Korea. MG Singlaub retired in 1978.
- 4 The account of the activities of the Special Forces soldiers assigned to the TLO was covered in *Veritas* Vol 8, No. 2, 2012. See Eugene G. Piasecki, "TLO: Line-crossers, Special Forces, and the Forgotten War," *Veritas* Vol 8, No.2, 2012, 38-48; Steven F. Kuni and Kenneth Finlayson, "Catch as Catch Can: Special Forces and Line Crossers in the Korean War," *Veritas*, Vol 2, No. 2, 2006, 26-32.



by Michael E. Krivdo

# The Army's **GUERRILLA COMMAND** in Korea

Part II: The Rest of the Story





This article concludes the narrative history of the U.S. Army's creation of a guerrilla command in Korea that began in the preceding issue of *Veritas* (Vol. 8, No. 2). The Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) formed a unit to administer and direct the operations of 'partisans' occupying relatively secure enclaves on both coasts of the Korean Peninsula. This account traces the major events that shaped the organization from the time Colonel (COL) John H. McGee departed his command in late June 1951 through the dissolution of the unit in 1954. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the organization, the doctrinal issues that shaped it, the concept of operations, the value of its services, and its successes and failures.<sup>2</sup> The narrative history is followed by three small articles that provide amplifying information related to the significant milestones of the guerrilla effort. By the end of the first full year of the guerrilla command's existence, the parameters for conducting Army guerrilla warfare were established and remained in effect throughout the war.<sup>3</sup>

By June 1951, the Army's guerrilla command had been operating against Communist forces in North Korea for five months. On the West Coast, Task Force (TF) LEOPARD cycled its 'Donkey' guerrilla units through a training regimen of weapons proficiency, demolitions, infantry small unit tactics, ambush techniques, and communications before returning the fighters to their respective operational areas. On the East Coast, the smaller TF KIRKLAND cadre did the same, but in a more restricted area with a less cohesive group of Koreans. Along the Main Line of Resistance (MLR), teams of the Tactical Liaison Office (TLO) inserted agents to probe enemy positions for actionable intelligence. And in training bases near Pusan, American and British instructors worked diligently to prepare combined UN-led guerrilla teams for insertion into the mountains of North Korea.<sup>4</sup> The guerrilla units proved to be a viable force.

At the tactical level, the guerrillas were accomplished at conducting raids and ambushes to keep the enemy off-balance. As the guerrillas gained experience their tactics evolved; raiding units became smaller, wielded more firepower, and became more adept at quickly attacking the enemy and then vanishing into the countryside. In the first six months of the war, they could still penetrate coastal defenses with ease and regularity and on occasion even conduct deeper operations beyond the coastal mountains. Their actions tied down significant numbers of Communist forces and guarded the seaward flanks of the UN line. The guerrilla command was effectively organized to maintain command and control over its widespread units, and could adapt to changing conditions on the ground.<sup>5</sup>

On the negative side, the guerrillas received little guidance or attention from their higher commands (both the Far East Command [FEC] and EUSA) who were frankly unsure how to employ them. In the absence of direction, the guerrilla advisors and unit leaders charted their own course; they conducted their own mission analysis, made plans, issued orders, and supervised the execution

**"For limited offensives up to a few thousand meters [inland], the [guerrillas] were very good offensive fighters, because they all knew how to use the bayonet, rifle and hand grenade. Therefore, we were able to carry out some creditable military operations."**<sup>1</sup>

— LTC Jay D. Vanderpool

## The Many Names of the Army's Guerrilla Command

The Army's Korean guerrilla command went through several name changes during the war. In addition, higher echelons were created, reorganized and renamed with great frequency. The many names caused considerable confusion even among persons assigned to the guerrilla units. Because of this, we use the single term 'guerrilla command' in a generic sense to describe the EUSA headquarters element that organized, trained, supported, and led the various guerrilla groups.

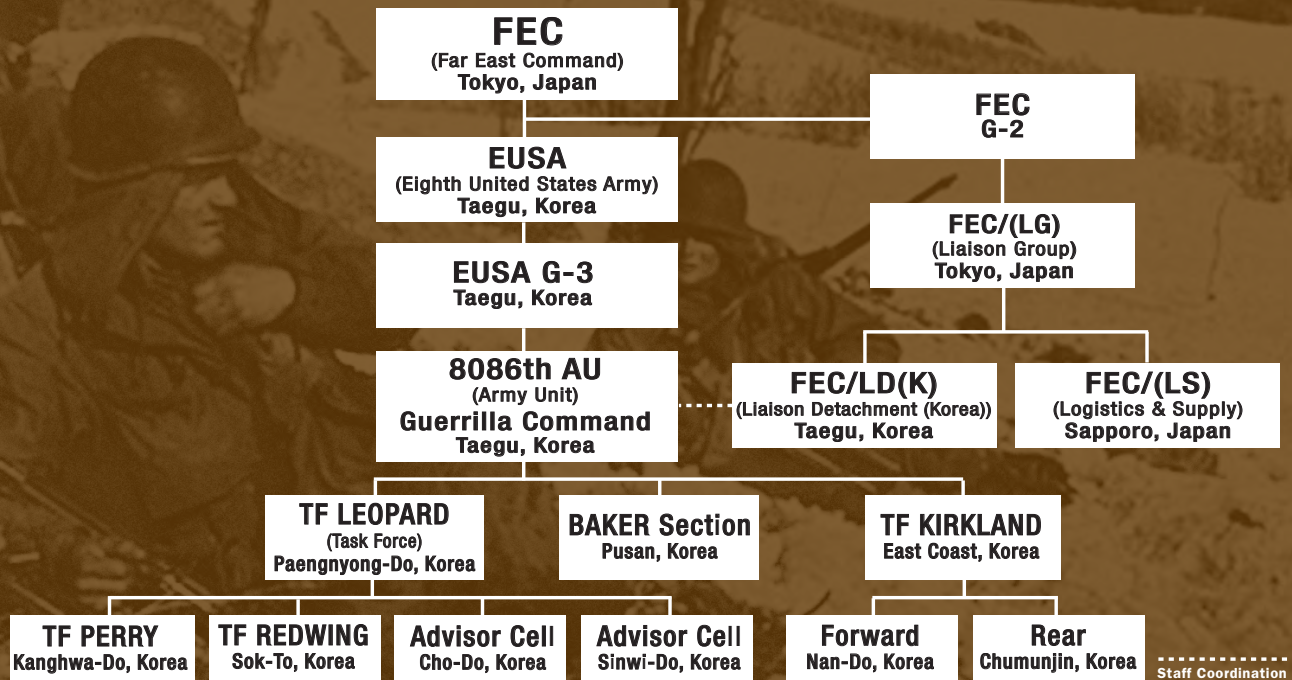
### Sequentially, the guerrilla command was known as:

- **The Attrition Section, Miscellaneous Division, EUSA**  
(15 January to 4 May 1951)
- **8086<sup>th</sup> Army Unit (AU)** (5 May to 9 December 1951)
- **8240<sup>th</sup> AU** (10 December 1951 to 7 March 1954)
- **8242<sup>nd</sup> AU** (CCRAK has OPCON of FEC/LD (K)  
(5 October 1952 - 7 March 1954)
- **8250<sup>th</sup> ROK AU** (Guerrillas only) (16 August 1953 -  
7 March 1954)
- **UN Partisan Forces Korea** (UNPFK)  
(21 November 1952 - September 1953)
- **UN Partisan Infantry Korea** (UNPIK)  
(September 1953 - 7 March 1954)

For the various names and tenures of the guerrilla command's higher echelons, see the article "Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK)" in this issue.



# Organization of the EUSA 8086<sup>th</sup> AU Guerrilla Command in June 1951

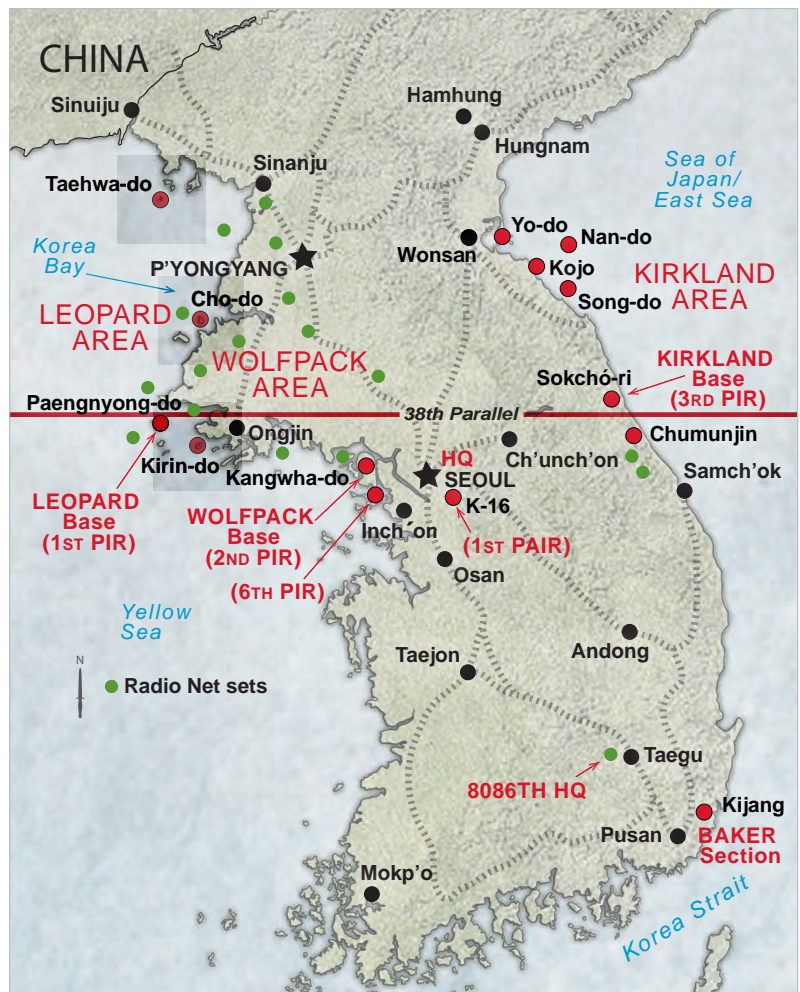


of those tasks. As a result, the guerrilla units produced small-scale tactical successes within their capabilities. Since the guerrillas occupied a low rung in the FEC and EUSA priority ladder, the higher commands only paid attention to them when problems surfaced.<sup>6</sup>

## Expanding the Role of Guerrillas

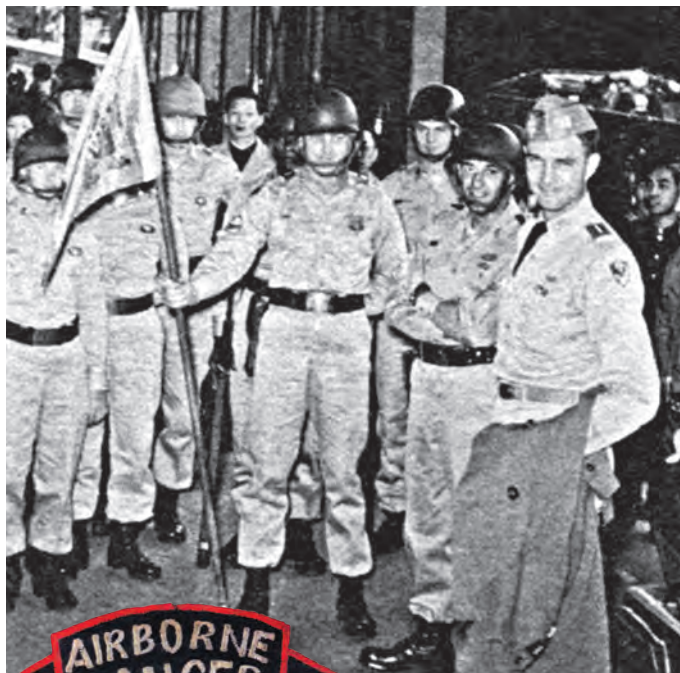
As commander of the 8086<sup>th</sup> Army Unit (AU) guerrilla command, COL McGee took great interest in the activities and welfare of his 'partisans.' He provided the vision and energy to make the Army's first deliberately formed unconventional warfare unit successful. The EUSA's guerrilla warfare expert, McGee pulled off an organizational miracle. He took a widely-dispersed, loosely-organized rabble of resistance fighters and family members and forged them into a capable guerrilla force led and sustained by American advisors. McGee's initial plan was so effective that it remained the model for Army guerrilla operations throughout the war. He took pride in his creation and continually made organizational improvements to meet new combat requirements.<sup>7</sup>

One significant change involved the role guerrillas would fill in guarding the South's capital city of Seoul. The massive Chinese 'Volunteer' intervention of October-November 1950 had not only pushed United Nations (UN) forces out of North Korea, but by January 1951 the Communists had recaptured Seoul. On 16



Status and locations of the various units of the Eighth U.S. Army's 8086th Army Unit (AU) guerrilla command in June 1951.





CPT Robert I. Channon, with fellow Rangers, leaving for the U.S. after a reconnaissance tour behind Communist lines. (photo courtesy of COL Robert I. Channon.)

March 1951, UN troops retook the capital in a massive counter-offensive. They pushed forces up the Kimpo Peninsula west of Seoul all the way to the banks of the Han River. Farther to the west were several large islands that controlled the mouths of the Han and Imjin Rivers. If the UN forces occupied those islands they could dominate maritime access to these key rivers and guard the west flank of Seoul.<sup>8</sup>

Fortunately for the UN, McGee's TF LEOPARD already had guerrillas on each of the two main islands of the Han Estuary; Kyodong-do and Kanghwa-do (see map). Yet because of the distance from TF LEOPARD, American advisors rarely visited them and lacked a clear picture of their tactical situation. To add to the confusion, the commander of LEOPARD Base, Major (MAJ) William A. Burke, received reports in late May 1951 that a new band of North Korean irregulars had settled in Kanghwa-do, creating friction among the guerrillas.<sup>9</sup> If the Han Estuary guerrillas were to become part of the UN's defensive scheme, McGee had to determine the disposition and fighting capabilities of his forces in that area and tighten control over them.

MAJ Burke tasked Captain (CPT) Robert I. Channon to visit the islands, meet with the leaders, and view their dispositions first-hand. Channon, former executive officer of the 3rd Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne), had been 'marking time' recovering from wounds and agreed to

Composite graphic with an original tactical map depicting the two main islands (Kyodong-do and Kanghwa-do) of the Han River Estuary that guard the mouth of the Han River and the Kimpo Peninsula. The landmass to the north and west of those islands had been in South Korean hands before the war, but by January 1951 was occupied by the Communists. The red line indicates the boundary between North and South Korea. The inset shows Task Force (TF) PERRY's area of operations (AO) in June 1951. The guerrillas of TF PERRY occupied many of the islands from the Yonpyong group in the west to Kanghwa-do in the east. TF PERRY helped guard the left flank of the United Nations defensive line and became the independent WOLFPACK unit in December 1951.





perform reconnaissance missions for McGee. At the end of May 1951, Channon and an interpreter left LEOPARD for a reconnaissance that would last about three weeks. Afterward, CPT Channon briefed COL McGee and MAJ Burke on the situation in the islands (see sidebar). Based on Channon's assessment, McGee decided to establish a new command element in the Han River Estuary to better coordinate and control partisan activities.<sup>10</sup>

McGee opted to form a small command and control (C&C) cell using LEOPARD assets and sent them to one of the Han Islands. He temporarily subordinated the C&C cell to LEOPARD so that Burke could still centrally manage all West Coast guerrilla activities.<sup>11</sup> Because the new unit would soon be independent, he wanted an experienced trainer in charge. McGee chose his chief instructor, MAJ Eugene M. Perry, Jr. (the officer in charge of the BAKER training section). Perry was given two enlisted radio men to control the guerrillas and to maintain contact with LEOPARD Base and adjacent UN units. On 21 June 1951, the new C&C cell (christened TF PERRY) became operational on Kyodong Island. MAJ Perry assumed responsibility for guerrilla operations from Kanghwa-do on the east to the Yonpyong island group in the west (see map) and had four separate units totaling about 2,000 guerrillas.<sup>12</sup>

Although MAJ Perry initially established his headquarters on Kyodong-do because of its central location, operational demands forced him to relocate further east. Since he spent most of his time coordinating with conventional units on the Kimpo Peninsula he moved his headquarters to Kanghwa-do on 12 July 1951 to better perform that function. Through time, the importance of the guerrillas' role in the UN defense grew to the point that it dictated a stronger American element. As a result, by year's end TF PERRY became a separate and distinct guerrilla unit (TF WOLFPACK), reporting directly to the guerrilla command.<sup>13</sup>

While TF PERRY was getting established, COL McGee relinquished command on 1 July 1951 to attend the Army War College. At the EUSA forward headquarters in Taegu, COL McGee's executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Samuel W. Koster, assumed command of the guerrillas. A U.S. Military Academy graduate (1942) and WWII combat infantry veteran, Koster had served as McGee's second-in-command for about two months. Although that short experience gave him some familiarity with the guerrillas and special operations, Koster had little time to reflect on his new position since he became entangled in a major special operation on the verge of disaster.<sup>14</sup>

Two weeks before LTC Koster assumed command of the guerrillas, Operation SPITFIRE began. It would have far-reaching consequences for long-range guerrilla operations. Operation SPITFIRE kicked off with five men parachuting into North Korea (see the separate article in this issue for details). Their mission was to establish a long-term guerrilla base in the rugged central mountains of North Korea to organize disaffected citizens to fight the Communists. It was a large operation involving 57 personnel. The five-man 'Pathfinder' element (one



**BG Samuel W. Koster.**

British officer, two American sergeants, and two Koreans) was to set up a drop zone for the main body. They would arrive in three successive airdrops (12-20 men dropping every seven to ten days). Despite improved planning and rehearsals since the airborne fiasco of VIRGINIA I in March 1951, SPITFIRE never got beyond its second phase.<sup>15</sup>

On 6 July 1951, the enemy discovered SPITFIRE and engaged it, inflicting several casualties and forcing the rest to evade in small groups. Until the last survivors walked into 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment lines (26 July), LTC Koster was fixated on rescuing SPITFIRE. But the problem was beyond his capabilities. The few survivors escaped on their own accord.<sup>16</sup>

FEC's difficulties in rescuing Westerners on deep missions prompted it to change the composition of the airborne teams. In addition to seven Korean guerrillas, SPITFIRE lost Ranger Sergeant (SGT) William T. Miles and British Fusilier Calder Mills.<sup>17</sup> FEC now 'dropped the hammer;' no more Americans or British on "long-term airborne missions into North Korea."<sup>18</sup> FEC's position was that non-Asians inserted into the mountains of Korea could not blend in among the people, making it difficult to evade and survive in the tightly controlled Communist society. In reality, Korean guerrillas dropped into an unfamiliar part of North Korea had a minimal chance of survival, but FEC was more concerned with allied casualties than with guerrillas. The prohibition on Western participation removed the only experienced operatives from deep, behind-the-lines missions; future teams consisted of poorly-trained and inexperienced men, led by untested and unproven leaders. In every account of VIRGINIA I and SPITFIRE, the battle-seasoned Americans and British provided the calm, experienced leadership. The blanket prohibition on American participation doomed subsequent deep airborne missions.

FEC stuck by its decision, arguing that its experience showed that "American military personnel are so readily identifiable by physical, racial, and linguistic characteristics" it was impossible for them to escape detection for long.<sup>19</sup> FEC disagreed with the contents



of the Army Field Manual on guerrilla operations (FM 31-21) that advocated American advisor support in combat operations. The staff recommended revision of the manual arguing that “in this [Korean] theater only indigenous personnel can operate safely behind enemy lines.” Ignoring the workable doctrinal framework in FM 31-2, FEC contended that unconventional warfare (UW) operations could only “be mounted and conducted from friendly-held bases: island, floating, or rear-area bases,” where the firepower and reinforcement from the nearby bases could be employed to ‘bail out’ teams in trouble.<sup>20</sup> The results of SPITFIRE probably caused FEC to overreact. While FEC planners might have been justified in removing Americans from long-term deep airborne missions, there was less reason to prohibit Americans from participating in airborne raids that by definition include a planned extraction of the force. That is, unless FEC believed it could not provide Americans with a capability to extract them in an emergency. The successful completion of short raids would have given the Korean participants a better experience base to apply to deeper missions, increasing their chances of survival.<sup>21</sup> Other developments also limited guerrilla actions.

When cease-fire talks began on 10 July 1951, the negotiations had a direct impact on guerrilla warfare operations. The U.S. driven decision to seek a negotiated settlement suggested to many Koreans that the UN forces were retreating from a policy of reunifying Korea to one of restoring the *status quo antebellum* of two Koreas. That major change between UN and ROK war goals had ominous implications for the guerrillas. The North Korean ‘partisans’ wanted to push the Communists out of the North and return to their homes. The negotiations meant that they might never free their homeland, forcing them to choose between returning home to live under Communist rule or integrating into South Korean society.

Neither choice was palatable. Some guerrillas began to question why they should continue to risk life and limb over a lost cause.<sup>22</sup>

Despite the talks, a contemporary study assessed that “partisan morale appears to have been quite good in 1951.”<sup>23</sup> In fact, the number of combat actions doubled from an average of 101 reported events per month in 1951, to 221 per month throughout 1952. The guerrillas also grew steadily in size from about 6,000 to over 20,000 during that same period. Even accounting for some degree of ‘double-counting’ and inflation of numbers, the evidence suggests that the guerrillas remained an effective combat force within their capabilities. Although some of the raids were undertaken more for the benefit of the guerrillas than for the FEC, those actions still forced the Communists to react and inflicted damage on the local economy.<sup>24</sup> Successful raids of this type actually bolstered the morale of the guerrillas and reduced the logistical burden on the American advisors.

## Changes From Above

In August 1951, the commander of UN/FEC forces, General Matthew B. Ridgway, wanted to gain control over the many entities conducting unconventional warfare in North Korea. There were almost a dozen different units from all services and agencies working with guerrillas and the lack of a central coordinating body caused problems. First, it led to overlaps and gaps in the employing of guerrillas to gain information or engage targets. Second, it resulted in several fratricide incidents.<sup>25</sup> To correct these problems the FEC formed a string of new theater-level staff sections under the FEC G-2. The first of these *ad hoc* units created was the Far East Command Liaison Group (FEC/LG) and its coordinating element in Korea, the Far East Command Liaison Detachment, Korea (FEC/LD [K]). When that failed to accomplish its goals



On his return from the Kaesong cease fire talks Rear Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, USN, United Nations delegate to the Armistice negotiations, is surrounded by news correspondents and a photographer.



Lieutenant General Nam Il, North Korean People's Army senior Communist delegate to the cease fire talks is shown departing Armistice negotiations at Kaesong, Korea.

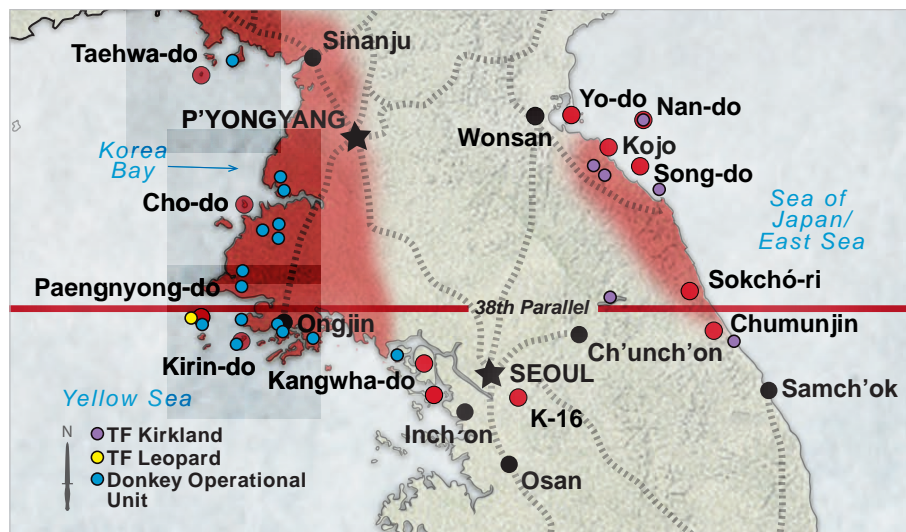


a new unit, the Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK), was formed and command relationships shifted. But these efforts amounted to G-2 'band aids' that had little impact on the EUSA's guerrilla warfare effort. At the unit level, the guerrilla command continued to operate as it had since its inception: with little guidance from above. These attempts to impose a theater-level staff section simply had no real impact on the guerrilla units, their advisors, or trainers.<sup>26</sup>

One positive feature of the FEC's attempts to create a theater-level guerrilla command is that it introduced a new officer in FEC/LG who would have a direct impact on the guerrilla warfare campaign in Korea. LTC Jay D. Vanderpool, a WWII veteran combat leader, like COL McGee, had served with guerrillas in the Philippines (see separate article in this issue). In Korea, Vanderpool leveraged his WWII UW experiences to better mesh the activities of the guerrillas with rapidly changing UN goals, a task that proved to be a great challenge. With the creation of FEC/LG on 26 July, Vanderpool became the 'middle man' who coordinated the activities of Koster's guerrillas with staff officers in the FEC G-2.<sup>27</sup> And he later would replace Koster as the commander of the Army's guerrilla unit.

By early August 1951, the American-led guerrillas had been raiding targets in North Korea for over six months. With Armistice negotiations ongoing, the Communists used that opportunity to focus new attention on the troublesome islands and the hated guerrillas who occupied them.<sup>28</sup> Although UN negotiators had put the islands 'on the table' in exchange for the town of Kaesong (an ancient capital city near the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel), the allies were unwilling to just give the islands away. The guerrilla-held islands provided the UNC and FEC with too great an advantage at little risk to warrant letting them go without a fight. Others on the UN side wanted to hold on to the islands regardless; one negotiator noting that "it is probably not possible to equate the military value of the islands off the coast of North Korea with an acreage calculation," meaning "the islands were of some real strategic value" that far outweighed the proposed simple exchange of territory.<sup>29</sup> The more realistic negotiators also realized "that the Communists would attempt to recapture" the islands if they were unsuccessful in gaining them at the Armistice table.<sup>30</sup> In any event, few were surprised when the Communists used the Armistice talks as a distraction to seize the islands by force.

In August 1951, declaring that the UN had "wantonly undertaken . . . provocative acts," the North Koreans suspended the Armistice talks indefinitely. Over the next four months the Communists used the collapse of negotiations as cover to try to wipe out the guerrillas



Organization and locations of Miscellaneous Group, 8086<sup>th</sup> AU, EUSA, July-August 1951.<sup>31</sup>

and regain their islands.<sup>32</sup> One of the first attacks occurred on the East Coast against TF KIRKLAND's forward staging base at Song-do, a small, rocky island only 900 meters from the mainland and about fifty miles north of the UN lines (see map). Just after midnight on 3 August 1951, the small guerrilla contingent snapped awake to the sounds of explosions, small arms firing, and piercing screams. First Lieutenant (1LT) Joseph R. Ulatoski, the American guerrilla leader knew that "the volume of fire coming in was more than just a routine probe."<sup>33</sup> The defenders had been caught napping and quickly evacuated the island in a small motor launch. But before leaving, Corporal (CPL) Cyril A. Tritz activated a fuse igniter tied into a large charge placed in the island's ammunition dump. CPL Tritz' 'parting gift,' coupled with a pre-arranged and prolonged naval gunfire salvo, killed most of the attackers and demoralized the few that survived. As a result, friendly forces reoccupied the island several days later.<sup>34</sup>

Similar attacks broke out on the West Coast. The Chinese and North Koreans attacked guerrilla-held islands beginning in the north near the mouth of the Yalu River. From August to November, the enemy assaulted one island after another: Ae-do; Yuk-do; Yongui-do; Sinmi-do; Ka-do; T'an-do; and Sohwa-do. Each fell to the Communists and the guerrillas were pushed back onto their major holding in the northern island sector, Taehwa-do. As the fight for the islands intensified the Communists resorted to daylight bombings and shore-based heavy artillery fires. UN forces responded with sorties of jet fighters, bombers, and naval gunfire ships. The fight for Taehwa-do produced mixed results for both sides: the Americans won the largest air battle of the war, downing twelve Chinese bombers and fighter escorts; but in the end the Chinese still pushed the guerrillas out to sea (see separate article in this issue) and briefly occupied the island. The cost to the guerrilla command was high; two American officers killed, and three British officers and one American sergeant captured.<sup>35</sup>



Although the guerrillas soon recaptured several of the islands, the setback forced FEC to reevaluate its plans for island defense. To prevent similar losses in the future, FEC tasked the U.S. Navy with overall responsibility for island defense on both coasts. FEC also formally tasked the guerrillas to assist the Navy and island defense became a major guerrilla mission after January 1952. And since the guerrillas assumed a larger role in theater-level plans, the FEC decided to gain greater control over guerrilla activities. FEC therefore engaged in a flurry of efforts to again reorganize the guerrillas at a theater level.<sup>36</sup>

## Vanderpool Takes Over

On 10 December 1951, FEC redesignated the EUSA's 8086<sup>th</sup> guerrilla command as part of 8240<sup>th</sup> AU FEC/LG, formally placing the guerrillas under the operational control (OPCON) of the FEC/LD (K) staff. This had little effect on the various guerrilla task forces. The only change of any consequence was that LTC Jay D. Vanderpool (formerly the FEC/LD [K] Partisan Operations Officer) assumed direct command of the guerrillas and LTC Koster became his Operations and Training Staff Officer. Vanderpool commanded the day-to-day activities of the

partisans and was directly responsible for all guerrilla operations, training, and administration. For the next sixteen months (until he departed Korea in April 1953), LTC Vanderpool was the only commander the guerrillas and their advisors knew. He provided stability, leadership, and insulated the guerrilla command from the never-ending uncertainty, lack of direction, and indecision that characterized both FEC/LG and CCRAK. Men of the guerrilla command knew who was in charge. WWII combat veteran Major Richard M. Ripley, WOLFPACK commander, stated clearly that "the only operational guidance I received came from Vanderpool."<sup>37</sup> Ripley dryly observed that CCRAK, far from being the element that 'called the shots' in guerrilla warfare operations, "was just another layer down south" with no influence whatsoever on how he ran his guerrillas.<sup>38</sup> The bottom line is that CCRAK, FEC/LG, and similar theater-level staff sections had no real impact over the EUSA's guerrilla command and its operations.

LTC Vanderpool quickly proved to be the right person to head the guerrilla command. He competently filled the command vacuum caused by the ever-changing G-2 staff sections and their near-constant reorganizations. Vanderpool also provided much-needed stability, direction, and focus for the guerrillas, allowing them to operate effectively. Like COL McGee, Vanderpool issued clear guidance and direction that shaped how the guerrillas trained, planned and conducted their operations. He developed and circulated two key planning documents. In April 1952 he issued his "Guerrilla Operations Outline, 1952," a succinct directive to his task force commanders that provided broad guidance on tactics, operations, air and naval support, prioritization of targets, and other pertinent issues that molded the disparate units into a tighter, more cohesive organization. Intending the information more "as a guide, rather than a restriction" on their operations, it showed that Vanderpool valued the judgment of his subordinates in conducting guerrilla warfare (GW). The document reminded his subordinates to "avoid trying to win the war by yourself," and cautioned them that when the advantage "passed [to the enemy], get away to fight another day." He added sound advice learned during his days with the Philippine guerrillas: "Hit and run; those are guerrilla tactics," and "Substitute speed and surprise for mass." His suggestions shaped the guerrilla leaders' own operational planning and reestablished the solid framework of command and control earlier erected by COL McGee.<sup>39</sup>

Other initiatives revealed the depth of Vanderpool's influence on GW operations in Korea. He helped to create a 'Partisan Infantry' Battalion/Regimental (PIB/PIR) organizational structure and updated the FEC Operations Plan (OPLAN) ("Phase IIA") for Guerrilla Warfare. The OPLAN specified in clear terms the missions, tasks, and special planning considerations for each of his subordinate guerrilla elements. Vanderpool directed the retaking of some islands lost to the Communists, arranged fire support, and helped formulate plans to

## "Who's On These Islands?"

Seldom were the guerrillas and their advisors alone on an island. The islands often harbored a wide variety of detachments or units from all services or agencies. These included:

- **CIA personnel.**
- **Radar detachments.**
- **U.S. Air Force 'crash-boat' search and rescue detachments.**
- **Helicopter rescue detachments (all services).**
- **Communications detachments of various types (from signal intercept to retransmission sites).**
- **Counter-Intelligence teams and agents.**
- **ROK Marine Corps units and ROK Navy personnel & boats.**
- **U.S. Marine Corps units.**
- **Allied and American Navy shore fire control parties.**
- **ROK Army personnel and units.**
- **Anti-aircraft detachments.**
- **Occasional Military Police detachments.**
- **Various logistics and movement control personnel.**
- **Occasional Engineer and/or Seabee detachments.**





**A guerrilla instructor teaches other members of his unit basic demolition skills.**



**Korean guerrillas conducting communications training with the AN/GRC-9 'Angry 9' radio set.**

effectively defend them from counterattack. On one of the reoccupied islands (Sunwi-do in TF WOLFPACK's area), the guerrillas successfully repelled a 3,000-man North Korean amphibious assault with air and naval gunfire support, killing a large percentage of the attackers. LTC Vanderpool also ordered guerrilla raids against key radar sites and enemy headquarters. In addition, he paved the way for the first deployment of Special Forces trained personnel, although they arrived late in the conflict. Under his leadership the guerrilla force grew from about 6,000 to over 20,000 strong.<sup>40</sup>

A major change in the overall role of the guerrillas in theater took place on Vanderpool's 'watch.' The savage fight for the northwest islands in late 1951 reinforced the value of having the guerrillas defend key terrain behind enemy lines as bases for other elements. The guerrilla-held islands were ideally suited for radar units and signal intercept stations. They also served as safe havens for helicopter teams and boat crews, dedicated to rescuing downed airmen. And the forward location provided those assets with extended operating ranges in enemy territory. In addition, a large amount of the FEC intelligence during this static phase of the war came from guerrilla actions and agent insertions launched from those islands.

There were other advantages as well. The guerrillas occupied key terrain that controlled several Yellow Sea choke points, giving the UN forces an operational advantage. The friendly islands limited enemy movements around the mouth of the Yalu River, into the port cities of Chinnam'po and Haeju, and within the important Han River Estuary. The UN's control of the sea forced all support for the Communist front lines to move overland or by rail, making them vulnerable to air attacks.

To maintain that advantage, FEC made some changes that bolstered island defense. On 6 January 1952, FEC tasked the Commander, Naval Forces Far East (COMNAVFE) with responsibility for the defense of all islands north of the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel along both coasts. A new unit was formed (the UN Blockading and Escort Force [TF 95]) to provide "support for the ROK Marines and guerrillas holding the outposts." For the first time in the war, responsibility for the sea, air, and land elements of northern island defense were vested in one commander. Less than one month later, guerrillas repulsed a North Korean battalion-sized assault on the island of Yang-do (Shin-do) at the mouth of the Yalu River and inflicted heavy losses on the Communists.<sup>41</sup> Similar attempts on other islands were also turned back. With the support of allied aircraft and naval gunfire, Vanderpool's guerrillas reoccupied some of the islands they had held earlier. The friendly northern island outposts became a 'thorn in the side' of the Communists and a central issue in the ongoing negotiations.<sup>42</sup> The main point is that FEC recognized Vanderpool's guerrillas as a key component of the island defense plan and provided them with the resources to handle that task.

In late 1952, the guerrilla command went through several name changes. In addition to reorganizing the original Donkey and Wolfpack units into Partisan Infantry Battalions (PIBs) and Regiments (PIRs), a special Partisan Airborne Infantry Regiment (PAIR) was formed under BAKER Section and trained for Ranger-type missions. And in December 1952, Vanderpool's guerrilla command was officially redesignated as the United Nations Partisan Forces, Korea (UNPFK). Despite the name, the guerrillas remained under American, not UN, command. And the composition of those 'battalions' and 'regiments' varied widely.<sup>43</sup> From the outside,



**“Looking back, we could have developed a much more capable force much earlier, if we had just made up our mind as to what we wanted to achieve with this resource.”<sup>49</sup>**

— *BG Glenn E. Muggelberg*



1LT Joseph M. Castro is recognized on the USASOC Memorial Wall at Fort Bragg, NC.

these changes appeared dramatic, but they were really cosmetic ‘band aids’ of no real substance. The renaming did not reallocate forces to create standardized units or materially change anything that affected how the guerrillas operated. In fact, the guerrillas continued to use their original unit names. The reorganization did not address the main guerrilla problem, namely their waning morale as cease-fire negotiations intensified.

### **The Armistice and the Guerrillas**

By Spring 1953, it seemed fairly certain to most that the UN Command would agree to an Armistice with the Communists. This meant that the MLR would become the new boundary between North and South and the FEC would relinquish the islands north of the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel to the North Koreans. When this happened, the guerrillas’ homeland would remain under Communist control. With no homes to return to and lacking citizen status in the South, the Armistice would leave the guerrillas’ future uncertain. Many wondered why they should continue to fight if they had little to gain.<sup>44</sup>

Another blow that hit the guerrillas hard was the departure of their commander, LTC Vanderpool, on 14 April 1953. When Vanderpool left, a dizzying succession of staff officers from CCRAK was put in charge of the guerrillas. None adequately filled Vanderpool’s shoes and the guerrilla command essentially functioned on ‘autopilot,’ without an experienced and concerned leader who might have guided the guerrillas through that critical period. A permanent commander would not be assigned to the guerrilla command until August 1953, when California National Guard LTC Glenn E. Muggelberg stepped in and essentially presided over the unit’s deactivation. Although Muggelberg had gained

some knowledge of UW operations from his previous position as the CCRAK G-3, he had never before served as a combat commander.<sup>45</sup>

The impending Armistice agreement also allowed the Communists to shift forces off the front line to better protect rear areas. Between March and June 1953, the Communist forces “engaged in coastal and/or zonal defense in west Korea” increased twenty-five percent (from 146,300 to 203,900 enemy soldiers). The extra 57,600 Communist soldiers made it even more dangerous for the guerrillas to operate in that same region.<sup>46</sup>

The absence of a strong leader in the guerrilla command, the increasing enemy threat, and the elevated personal concern over their post-Armistice status combined to affect morale and led to a marked drop in guerrilla activity in the final few months of the war. In April 1953, the guerrillas reported 232 combat actions. By June that number had dropped to 87 engagements, and that figure rose only slightly in July (112 actions). July had a small spike in activity because of a flurry of confusing orders from CCRAK. The guerrillas were ordered to withdraw from some of the northernmost islands. Then, just as quickly, the orders were rescinded. Thus, the guerrillas had to retake the same islands they had just abandoned. Furthermore, more than ninety-seven percent of all those actions took place in Hwanghae Province, where the majority of the guerrillas originated. Almost every reported action occurred along the coast; only twenty-four were ‘interior-based actions.’ After April 1953, the majority of combat actions were shallow coastal raids to gain supplies and livestock to improve living conditions for the raiders.<sup>47</sup> The guerrillas figured the war was nearing the end and they sought to improve themselves in the only way they could.



In the last months a major change took place in the assignments of advisors. In March 1953, the first contingent of Army Special Forces (SF)-trained officers and noncommissioned officers arrived and were sent out to the guerrilla units. Not until the end of the war were personnel trained in UW operations purposefully dedicated to guerrilla command. Their arrival in Korea came too late to affect the guerrilla operations in any significant way. The SF-qualified personnel were assigned as individual replacements rather than more effectively employed as teams (as they had been trained).<sup>48</sup>

At the end of the war, confusion reigned within the guerrilla command as its elements reacted to often conflicting orders and requests. In the absence of a permanent commander, no one insulated the guerrillas from the barrage of confusing, even contradictory directions put out by various FEC staff officers. A good example of this occurred when CCRAK ordered the guerrillas to withdraw from its northern island base. The next morning, CCRAK told them to retake the same island they had just departed. As CCRAK G-3 LTC Muggelberg described it, we “had to try to fight our way back on some of those islands. We lost some good troops at that point. One young lieutenant, I wish I could remember his name, he was a fine officer in the 1<sup>st</sup> Partisans [Regiment], was killed in that operation. We never did make it back to many of our former locations.”<sup>50</sup>

The lieutenant in question was Joseph M. Castro, a recently arrived Special Forces-qualified officer who was killed in action on 27 May 1953.<sup>51</sup>

Around 12 June 1953, FEC dissolved the 5<sup>th</sup> PIR at Yonpyong-do and transferred its guerrillas into other PIRs on the West Coast. Simultaneously, the 6<sup>th</sup> PIR moved south from Cho-do near the mouth of the Taedong River to Yongyu-do off Inch'on. In many cases the guerrillas' dependents were relocated as well. By the time the Armistice was signed, all guerrilla units were off of the northernmost islands with only a few groups defending the remaining UN-controlled islands. FEC specifically ordered that “No Caucasians were to be left behind in evacuated areas after a truce,” but authorized the guerrillas to plant caches of weapons and ammunition in the event hostilities resumed and they needed to retake the islands. Although some raids and combat actions continued into North Korea for a few months after the Armistice, they were shallow attacks and few in number.<sup>52</sup> After the Armistice, the requirement for a guerrilla force disappeared.

## Demobilization

Probably the most noteworthy achievement of the FEC in the final months of the war occurred after the Armistice was signed - the successful demobilization of the guerrillas. The transition phase is regarded one of the most critical elements of UW operations. Current doctrine notes that “Perhaps the greatest danger in transition is the possibility that former resistance members may resort to factional disputes, banditry, or subversion of the new government.”<sup>53</sup> The command was sensitive to the problems of allowing an armed guerrilla force to remain intact when the “purpose for which [it] was organized . . . cease to exist.”<sup>54</sup> Fortunately for the guerrilla command advisors, FM 31-21 (October 1951), *Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare*, provided detailed guidance to transition guerrillas to civilians or to integrate them into the regular forces.<sup>55</sup>

However, before demobilization could begin, it was necessary to first establish the citizenship status of the North Korean guerrillas. On 16 August 1953, the CCRAK commander, BG Archibald W. Stuart, and the South Korean Minister of National Defense, Sohn Won-il, reached an agreement. A U.S. funded 8250<sup>th</sup> AU was created within the ROKA and all guerrillas transferred into it. This Stuart-Sohn agreement made the ROKA responsible for the administration and discipline of the former guerrillas who became ROKA soldiers.<sup>56</sup>



Locations of UNPFK guerrilla units at the time of the Armistice, July 1953.





A WOLFPACK guerrilla ammunition dump (1953).

In late September 1953, one final paper reorganization took place in guerrilla command. UNPFK's name was changed to the United Nations Partisan Infantry, Korea (UNPIK). Like many of the previous name changes, this one also had no substance – no organizational changes were connected with it. The name change from 'Force' to 'Infantry' was wholly cosmetic and done to make the American advisors eligible for Combat Infantryman Badges (CIBs) based on service in an 'infantry' unit. Although many American advisors had been awarded CIBs for combat actions with the guerrillas previously, some CCRAK staff officers felt that the name change would clarify their status under the Armistice.<sup>57</sup>

The actual guerrilla deactivation (Operation QUICKSILVER) went fairly smoothly, although several American advisors approached that major milestone with a degree of trepidation. Beginning on 23 February 1954, the American advisors held final formations at each of the PIRs, issued awards, collected weapons and ammunition, and then transported them to ROKA collection sites. The former guerrillas were allowed to keep their small arms but the advisors supervised the collection of crew-served weapons, mortars, grenades, demolition materials, and rocket launchers. The hardest part was retrieving those materials from hundreds of cache sites on the islands. Those on the mainland were untouched.<sup>58</sup>

By 7 March 1954, the demobilization had been completed and about 10,000 former guerrillas in the Partisan Infantry Regiments were successfully transferred to ROKA authority.

About 2,000 guerrillas slipped away to return home. Some were simply 'ghosts' on the unit rolls to warrant rations. Others remained in North Korea, stating "We are going to stay here and prosecute the war."<sup>59</sup> But most stayed with their unit. Once they were transferred to ROKA control the former guerrillas were treated in three ways: some were discharged from service; some were retained in their former leadership capacity; and the remainder transferred throughout the ROKA. All received appropriate ROK citizenship documentation. During the transition, some American advisors acted as leaders to the former guerrillas until the demobilization was accomplished.<sup>60</sup>



UNPFK  
Patch



UNPIK  
Patch

## Conclusion

How effective was the Army's guerrilla command? At the tactical level it was fairly successful since the hit-and-run tactics of the guerrillas were often quite lethal. The West Coast units, in particular, used their intimate knowledge of the terrain, customs, and people to great advantage. The guerrillas were cunning fighters who were often fearless. They fought savagely, understanding all too well that the enemy would show them no mercy. In the first year of their existence, before the idea of a negotiated settlement dissipated some resolve, they experienced good success against poorly trained Communist militias.

However, FEC let the guerrillas down: it failed to identify a critical role for them at the theater level. For a time in 1951-1952 the guerrillas could have been employed to greater advantage



in operational roles. During that period, the guerrillas enjoyed the support of a wide section of the populace within the Hwanghae Province, where many of them originated. They operated at relative ease there through 1952. But FEC made no effort to take advantage of that situation or even realized its implications. Although the guerrillas made solid contributions to the theater fight by guarding the UN MLR flank and holding important islands, their potential was underappreciated.

Within the U.S. Army, few learned any significant lessons from this first deliberate effort to form and employ a guerrilla force in combat. There was no institutional interest in collecting the lessons learned from the many soldiers who worked side-by-side with the guerrillas and advised them. In fact, American advisors were warned not to talk about their experiences in the guerrilla command, even when those same individuals returned to Fort Bragg to teach new generations of Special Forces soldiers about UW. A formal debrief or interview policy would have yielded a wealth of 'real world' experiences and information to improve SF doctrine for UW/GW operations.<sup>61</sup>

Fortunately for the guerrillas, they were generally well led. The groundwork established by COL McGee in early 1951, and the excellent guidance and leadership of LTC Vanderpool provided the foundation that supported day-to-day operations and administration. Both leaders leveraged their WWII experiences to produce a successful guerrilla organization that became a valued element of the Far East Command. The many individual guerrilla advisors, although not given cultural and linguistic training, rose to the challenge and forged effective relationships with their guerrillas. Living and working side-by-side with the guerrillas, the advisors planned, supported, and executed difficult combat missions with minimal support.

The legacy of the success achieved by the guerrillas and their advisors extends to the present. It lives in the three clusters of islands under ROK control along the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel: the Han River Estuary; the Yonpyong Islands; and the Paengnyong group. Another lasting contribution is the continuous and close U.S.-ROK Special Forces relationship. Finally, both the U.S. and ROK realize the value and utility of the UW mission in future conflict. In the event of war on the Korean Peninsula, the two Special Forces form a Combined Unconventional Warfare Task Force (CUWTF) to conduct missions similar to those done by the EUSA guerrilla command. It is manifest in the long-standing slogan that captures the spirit of ROK and U.S. forces working side-by-side, *katchi kapshida* ("we go together")!<sup>62</sup> ▲

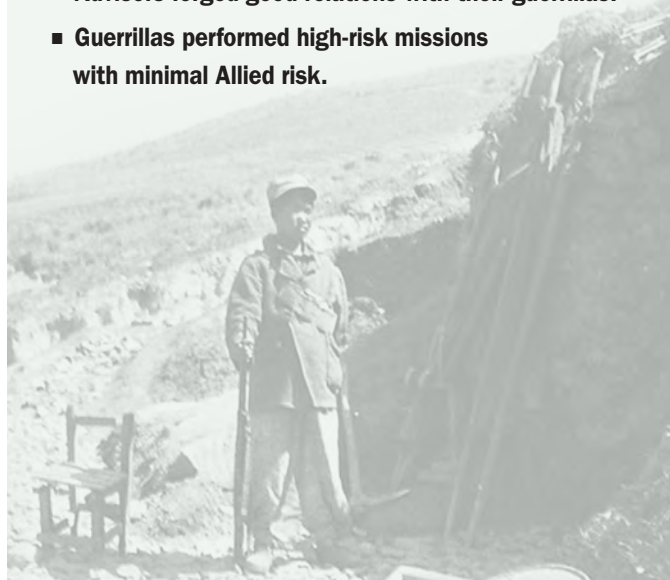
## Guerrilla Command Problems and Successes:

### PROBLEMS:

- FEC provided little guidance or direction (no theater-level plan).
- Deep parachute operations failed.
- Guerrillas produced only small-scale tactical-level results.
- Special Forces-qualified personnel arrived too late to make a significant impact, and were not properly employed (used as individual replacements vice teams).
- Advisors had no prior language/cultural training.
- FEC applied existing doctrine selectively, degrading capability.

### SUCCESSES:

- Guerrillas seized and defended key islands for critical Escape and Evasion, intelligence, early warning, and combat assets.
- Provided significant amounts of tactical and operational intelligence.
- Guarded the weak left flank of the UN MLR.
- Tied down large numbers of enemy troops in rear areas.
- Successfully demobilized the guerrillas and transitioned them into the ROK.
- Benefited from the WWII experiences of two guerrilla commanders (COL McGee and LTC Vanderpool).
- Validated parts of the Army's existing GW doctrine.
- Advisors forged good relations with their guerrillas.
- Guerrillas performed high-risk missions with minimal Allied risk.





## More of the story: SPITFIRE, the Northwest Islands, and MAJ Jay D. Vanderpool

Following this article are three related short pieces connected with this narrative history of the development of the EUSA guerrilla command. Two are abbreviated case studies that provide greater resolution on key events in the Korean guerrilla experience and one presents a short biographical sketch. The first article ("SPITFIRE: No Lessons Learned") reveals details on the deep airborne Operation SPITFIRE, a disastrous attempt to establish a guerrilla base in the interior of North Korea. It is important because after the debacle FEC prohibited Allied advisors from similar airborne missions. From that point on, only Korean guerrillas conduct deep airborne operations and every mission failed. This article explores the unintended consequences of the FEC decision.

The second short article describes how the savage fighting in the northwest islands in late 1951 changed the role of guerrillas. FEC realized the utility of the controlling the islands above the 38th Parallel. They served as the 'eyes and ears' for the FEC. The islands also provided safe bases from which rescue efforts and intelligence collection operations could be launched. As a result of that fight, FEC made adjustments to the guerrillas' roles and missions.

The third piece presents background on MAJ Jay D. Vanderpool. In particular it focuses on Vanderpool's experiences with the Philippine guerrillas in WWII. The article describes his training and functioning as an advisor of guerrillas in southern Luzon. It imparts the familiarity he gained in UW by working closely with Filipino guerrillas. These experiences prepared Vanderpool for commanding Korean guerrillas.

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*Michael Krivdo earned his PhD in Military and Diplomatic History from Texas A&M University. He is a former Marine Corps Force Reconnaissance Officer with varied special operations research interests.*

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## Endnotes

- 1 Jay D. Vanderpool, interviewed by John R. McQuestion, 1983, Project 83-12, "Senior Officers Oral History Program," U.S. Army Military History Institute (USAMHI), Carlisle Barracks, PA, 143 (hereafter Vanderpool Interview).
- 2 For background on the initial forming of the unit and McGee's tenure, see: Michael E. Krivdo, "Creating an Army Guerrilla Command, Part One: The First Six Months," *Veritas* 8, no. 2 (2012), 12-26. Other articles in that issue provide insight into the origins of the North Korean resistance movement and their motivations to become guerrillas.
- 3 In the interests of clarity, this article continues the practice began in the preceding issue of *Veritas* of using the term Guerrilla Command to describe the EUSA organization formed on 15 January 1951 to train, direct, and support North Korean guerrilla units. The term is employed to more accurately describe that unit since it changed official names repeatedly throughout the war. In this way, one consistent term can be used throughout the article to refer to the unit in the generic sense.

- 4 Krivdo, "The First Six Months," 12-26. The term 'Donkey' was widely used in West Coast guerrilla units to signify their unit: Guerrilla Unit 3 became Donkey 3. Later, after TF WOLFPACK became operational, 'Donkeys' in that unit took on the descriptor 'Wolfpack,' and its number, as in 'Wolfpack 3.' The origins of the Donkey term are described in: Krivdo, "The First Six Months," 20.
- 5 Frederick W. Cleaver, George Fitzpatrick, John Ponturo, et al., "UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954," AFPE Group Technical Memorandum ORO-T-64, Johns Hopkins University, Operations Research Office, June 1956 (hereafter ORO Study), *passim*; Krivdo, "The First Six Months," 12-26. Accounts indicate that the guerrilla tactics changed after the first six months of operation. Where they started off with attacks at battalion or company strength with a mixture of rifles and pistols, through time the attacking units became smaller and carried more firepower. Smaller units armed with automatic weapons and explosives made for a deadly combination. The small teams were both more mobile and harder to detect. Guerrilla units would saturate an area with teams of 3-15 men armed with semi-automatic rifles, submachine guns, rocket launchers, mines, and demolition charges to attack vulnerable enemy targets and then fade into the jungle. Some of the guerrillas became very skilled in the art of hit and run tactics, and they used those skills to great advantage.
- 6 Krivdo, "The First Six Months," 12-26.
- 7 Krivdo, "The First Six Months," 12-26; "Record of Assignments," John H. McGee Service Record (hereafter "McGee Service Record"), National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), St. Louis, MO.
- 8 Letter, John H. McGee to Shaun M. Darragh, San Antonio, TX, 8 February 1985 (hereafter Darragh Letter), Archives, Army Heritage Education Center (AHEC), Carlisle Barracks, PA, 18-19; Billy C. Mossman, *U.S. Army in the Korean War: Ebb and Flow, November 1950 – July 1951*. ([1990]; Reprinted, Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2000), 204-208, 328-30.
- 9 Robert I. Channon, *The Cold Steel Third: 3rd Airborne Ranger Company, Korean War (1950-1951)* (Franklin, NC: Genealogy Publishing Service, 1993), 408-10.
- 10 ORO Study, 41-42; Channon, *The Cold Steel Third*, 408-10, 417-28, 493-516.
- 11 Darragh Letter, 18-19; ORO Study, 41-42.
- 12 ORO Study, 41-42, 70; Ed Evanhoe, "Short Chronology of the Unconventional Warfare Campaign, 1950-1954," undated website at: <http://www.korean-war.com/warfarecampaign.html>, last accessed on 4 December 2012.
- 13 Richard M. Ripley, interview with Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, and Mr. Eugene Piasecki, 28 July 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; "Short Chronology of the Unconventional Warfare Campaign."
- 14 LTC Koster became the 8086<sup>th</sup> AU Executive Officer on 5 May 1951 and the Commanding Officer on 1 July 1951. "Record of Assignments," John H. McGee Service Record (hereafter "McGee Service Record"), National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), St. Louis, MO; "Record of Assignments," Samuel W. Koster (hereafter "Koster Service Record"), NPRC; ORO Study, 40. LTC Koster served in WWII with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 413<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 104<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, commanding that battalion during the Battle of the Bulge. He also saw combat during the Battle of Hurtgen Forest and at the crossing of the Rhine River at Remagen. After WWII, he served as Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 (Intelligence) for the 20<sup>th</sup> Armored Division (AD) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> AD before spending three years as the FEC G-2 Assistant Executive Officer for the G-2 Section. Koster left the FEC G-2 in August 1949 to become a Tactics Instructor at West Point. He returned to FEC in Tokyo on 17 October 1950 and worked as an Operations and Training Staff Officer before moving to the 8086<sup>th</sup> AU. However, Koster is best known for his role in the My Lai massacre of 16 March 1968. Then Major General Koster commanded the Americal Division and was flying in a helicopter over My Lai while the massacre was underway. He was the highest ranking officer to be charged in the case. Although the charges were dismissed, he was demoted to brigadier general, censured, and retired. BG Koster died in 2006 (David Stout, "Gen. S. W. Koster, 86, Who Was Demoted After My Lai, Dies," *New York Times*, 11 February 2006, available on the Internet at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/11/national/11koster.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/11/national/11koster.html?_r=0), last accessed on 12 December 2012), and (Patricia Sullivan, "Samuel Koster, 86; General Charged In My Lai Killings," *Washington Post*, 10 February 2006).
- 15 There are few primary source materials on Operation SPITFIRE; most of the information comes from secondary sources and third parties. And some of that material is contradictory or contains factually incorrect material. Probably the most complete single account appears in Ed[ward C.] Evanhoe, *Darkmoon: Eighth Army Special Operations in the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995), 103-16, yet it contains some inaccuracies. One specific weakness of that account is that it relies heavily on a single source, the "Sgt. C.H. Lane Diary," not available for scrutiny by historians. As such, its contents cannot be independently verified. Unfortunately, the accounts of SPITFIRE that appear in other secondary sources generally draw heavily from Evanhoe's version (of the Lane Diary) with undocumented variations, further clouding what actually happened. The few points that can be verified in this account are derived from the essential elements of the story found in primary documentation sources such as: Letter, CPT David C. Hearn to COL John H. McGee, 6 September 1951 (hereafter Hearn Letter),



- COL John H. McGee Papers, AHEC, Carlisle Barracks, PA; Letter, John H. McGee to Colonel Rod Paschall, San Antonio, TX, 24 March 1986 (hereafter Paschall Letter), AHEC, 22, 26-27; ORO Study, 92-94, 155.
- 16 Hearn Letter, 1-3; Evanhoe, *Dark Moon*, 103-16, ORO Study, 92-94, 155.
- 17 Hearn Letter, 1-3; ORO Study, 14-15, 52; Paul M. Edwards, *Combat Operations of the Korean War: Ground, Air, Sea, Special and Covert* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010), 165; Michael E. Haas, *In the Devil's Shadow: UN Special Operations during the Korean War* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2000), 57-60; "List of Royal Northumberland Fusiliers Killed in Korea," on internet at: [http://www.fusiliers-association.co.uk/Northumberland/RNF\\_Killed\\_in\\_Korea.htm](http://www.fusiliers-association.co.uk/Northumberland/RNF_Killed_in_Korea.htm), last accessed on 7 January 2013; News article, Alex McVeigh, "Korean War Hero Receives Distinguished Service Cross," 27 April 2009, *Army News Service*, available at: <http://www.army.mil/article/20225/>, last accessed on 28 December 2012. **SGT Miles had earlier participated in Operation VIRGINIA I and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, posthumously, in 2009 for his actions during SPITFIRE. Fusilier Mills accompanied British 2LT Leo S. Adams-Acton on SPITFIRE. As of the publication date, neither man's remains have been recovered. See sidebar for further analysis of the legacy of SPITFIRE.**
- 18 ORO Study, 52-53, 62-64, 74-76, 154-58. **See also the discussion in Evanhoe, *Darkmoon*, 117-18, quote from 117. Evanhoe, citing personal interviews he made with Koster, hints that part of the rationale for removing Americans/British from the missions centered around the simple fact that "Everyone was promised evacuation if wounded, but in reality only the seriously wounded American or British personnel would actually be medevaced (*sic*) because evacuation required a helicopter and pilot." Since those assets were scarce and the dangers of flights behind the lines great, "Eighth Army was reluctant to risk these [assets] for evacuating non-American or non-British personnel" (Evanhoe, *Darkmoon*, 118). By removing Americans from the high-risk, deep airborne missions, the difficult requirement of planning for evacuating them in emergencies simply went away.**
- 19 ORO Study, 52-53, 62-64, 74-76, quote from 75.
- 20 ORO Study, 75.
- 21 **According to Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 8 November 2010 (As Amended Through 15 February 2013) (Washington, DC: GPO), 239, a raid is defined as: "An operation to temporarily seize an area in order to secure information, confuse an adversary, capture personnel or equipment, or to destroy a capability culminating with a planned withdrawal."**
- 22 ORO Study, 30, 34.
- 23 ORO Study, 43.
- 24 **Statistics cited from ORO Study, 13-16. One interpretation of that data is that the guerrillas realized that their hopes of restoring their former lives were fading fast, causing them to focus more on gaining as much material wealth from the Communists as they could before being forced into South Korean society.**
- 25 ORO Study, 34-36; Message, HQ, Korean Navy, Pusan, 17 January 1951, GF/Rush/127 Hah, included in 8086<sup>th</sup> Army Unit (AU), Armed Forces Far East (AFFE) Military History Detachment-3, "UN Partisan Forces in the Korean Conflict, 1951-1952," Project MHD-3, Center of Military History (CMH), Fort McNair, DC, (hereafter "UN Partisan Forces"), 29; Memorandum, "Guerrilla Activity - Sabotage - North Korea," 9 March 1951, in "UN Partisan Forces," 46-48; Memorandum to: Chief of Staff, "Conference aboard the HMS Belfast, 14 March on Friendly Partisan Activity on West Coast of Korea," 17 March 1951, in "UN Partisan Forces," 59-60.
- 26 **For more information on FEC/LG, FEC/LD (K), or CCRACK, see the article in this issue: Michael E. Krivdo and Troy J. Saqueety, "The Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRACK).**
- 27 Morning Report, "FEC Ln Gp 8240<sup>th</sup> AU, Hq & Sv Cmd GHQ FEC," 1 August 1951, NPRC; "Record of Assignments," Service Record of Jay D. Vanderpool (hereafter "Vanderpool Service Record"), NPRC; Vanderpool Interview, 138; David W. Hogan, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Operations in World War II* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, Department of the Army, 1992), 80.
- 28 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), "The Secret War in Korea, June 1950-June 1952," *Clandestine Services History*, CS Historical Paper No. 52, 17 July 1968, 21.
- 29 Herbert Goldhamer, *The 1951 Korean Armistice Conference: A Personal Memoir* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1994), 94-95, 141-42, quotes from 95 and 141, respectively.
- 30 Goldhamer, *1951 Korean Armistice Conference*, 141-42, quote from 141.
- 31 Combines the collective information in: ORO Study, Figures A8 and A9, 40 and 42.
- 32 Vice Admiral Charles Turner Joy, *Negotiating While Fighting: The Diary of Admiral C. Turner Joy at the Korean Armistice Conference* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Publication 175, 1978), 33-35, quote from 34; Christine Bragg, *Vietnam, Korea, and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1945-1975* (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 2005), 67; Goldhamer, *1951 Korean Armistice Conference*, 141-42.
- 33 Joseph R. Ulatoski, interview with Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 7 March 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 34 Annex to letter from Joseph R. Ulatoski to USASOC History Office, 18 April 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Ulatoski interview, 7 March 2011; ORO Study, 155. **For more details on this action, see: Jared M. Tracy, "Working with What You Have: The Challenges of Guerrilla Warfare on the Korean East Coast, 1951-1953," *Veritas* 8, No. 2 (2012), 54-55.**
- 35 ORO Study, 34, 155; Evanhoe, *Darkmoon*, 130-31; ChineseDefence.Com, "Bloody Ride to Taehwa-do Island - the PLAFA's Costly Defeat over Korea," 3 August 2011, on Internet at: <http://www.chinesedefence.com/forums/chinese-air-force/629-bloody-ride-taehwa-do-island-plaafs-costly-defeat-over-korea.html>, last accessed on 6 February 2013; Kenneth P. Werrell, *Sabres over MiG Alley: The F-86 and the Battle for Air Superiority in Korea* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 107; James A. Field, Jr., *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1962), 423; U.S. Navy Historical Division, "Korean War: Chronology of U.S. Pacific Fleet Operations," July-December 1951, available on the Internet at: <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron51b.htm#sept>, last accessed 10 December 2012; Paul M. Edwards, *Korean War Almanac* (New York: InfoBase Publishing, 2006), 254; Goldhamer, *1951 Korean Armistice Conference*, 141-42.
- 36 ORO Study, 54-55, 62, 63, 155.
- 37 General Order 90, GHQ, FEC, 7 December 1951; General Order 975, HQ, EUSA, 10 December 1951; ORO Study, 64-65; Koster Service Record, NPRC; Vanderpool Service Record, NPRC; Richard M. Ripley, interview with Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, Mr. Eugene Piasecki, 28 July 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, quote from text; Richard M. Ripley, interview with Dr. Michael E. Krivdo and Mr. Eugene G. Piasecki, 31 January 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **Koster's service records actually indicate he changed duties to become the guerrilla command's Operations and Training Staff Officer on 11 December 1951.**
- 38 Interview of LTC Francis R. Purcell, G-2 Section, EUSA, 13 May 1953, included in "UN Partisan Forces," 103-112; Richard M. Ripley, interview with Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, Dr. Michael E. Krivdo and Mr. Eugene Piasecki, 28 July 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, quote from text; Richard M. Ripley, interview with Dr. Michael E. Krivdo and Mr. Eugene G. Piasecki, 31 January 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 39 Memorandum from Jay D. Vanderpool to Commanders, LEOPARD, WOLFPACK, KIRKLAND, BAKER Section, "Guerrilla Operations Outline, 1952," 11 April 1952, Guerrilla Section, FEC/LD(K), 8240<sup>th</sup> AU, reprinted in "UN Partisan Forces," 122-27, quotes from 127.
- 40 Vanderpool Interview, 138-50; OPERATION PLAN: PARTISAN OPERATIONS (K), PHASE IIA, HQ, FEC/LD(K), Seoul, Korea, 10 May 1953, reprinted in ORO Study, 162-67; ORO Study, 156, entries for 27 September 1952 and 24 November 1952.
- 41 Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front*, 196-97, quote from 196-97. **According to "Korean War: Chronology of U.S. Pacific Fleet Operations, January-April 1952," entry for 6 January 1952, CTF 95 "assigned responsibility for overall defense and local ground defense of east and west coast islands of Korea north of 38 North now held by UN and ROK Forces and for certain islands on the West Coast of Korea, South of 38N, where special Air Force equipment is based. The previous responsibility had been [Eighth] Army for ground defense and TF 95 for naval defense." The designation assigned responsibility for the defense of the islands to one commander.**
- 42 **For background and discussions on the importance of the northern islands during the early days of the Armistice negotiations, see: U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter *FRUS*) 1951, Vol. 7, *Korea and China*, Part 1 (Washington DC: GPO, 1983), 735-37; *FRUS*, 1951, 7:739-45; *FRUS*, 1951, 7:1075-76; *FRUS*, 1951, 7:1079-81; *FRUS*, 1951, 7:1085-86; *FRUS*, 1951, 7:1322; COL Moo Bong Ryoo, ROK Army, "The Korean Armistice and the Islands," U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 2009, 2-6, 16-18. Essentially, the UNC position was to trade away the strategic advantage of holding onto the northernmost islands as a bargaining chip to gain land concessions in other areas. COL Moo argues that such an approach was short-sighted and minimized the strategic advantages that could have been gained by holding onto the islands. The North Koreans, from their perspective, fully understood the strategic advantages to whoever held the islands and expended resources trying to regain them in the face of clear UNC naval and air superiority. The Communists expended many lives in efforts to retake the islands. Even today, the islands along the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel that remain under the control of the UNC have been the scene of several deadly incidents.**
- 43 ORO Study, 66-69.
- 44 ORO Study, 132-35.
- 45 "Record of Assignments," Jay D. Vanderpool Service Record (hereafter Vanderpool Service Record), NPRC; DA Form 66, Vanderpool Service Record; BG (Ret) Glenn [E.] Muggelberg, COL (Ret) Paul W. Steinbeck, and LTC (Ret) Michael A. Matzko, Interview by COL Rod Paschall and Dr. Edward J. Drea, 15 November 1985, Project 85-S, Korean Partisan Operations, United States Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC), Carlisle, PA, 5-6, 9-11. **COL Muggelberg had served during WWII as an infantry officer in a regiment**



- assigned to defend the West Coast of the United States. When the Korean War began, he was an instructor on the staff of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS, and assigned to Korea in May 1953.
- 46 ORO Study, 132.
- 47 ORO Study, 13, 84, 121-27, 163. **Guerrilla combat actions decreased in April 1953 from a rough average of 221 per month to only 161 per month between April and July 1953, when the Armistice was signed** (ORO Study, 13).
- 48 Orders, Department of the Army, Adjutant General, TAG 14357, 27 February 1953; Orders, DA, TAG 16679, 27 March 1953. **For further information on the experiences of the ninety-nine SF-trained personnel who were employed in Korea beginning in March 1953, see the article by Kenneth Finlayson, "A Combat First: Army SF Soldiers in Korea, 1953-1955," in this issue of Veritas.**
- 49 Muggelberg Interview, AHEC, 11.
- 50 Muggelberg Interview, AHEC, 14.
- 51 ORO Study, 110-11; Database, "U.S. Military Fatalities of the Korean War for Home State of Record: Indiana," from Korean War Extract Data File, as of 29 April, 2008, Defense Casualty Analysis System (DCAS) Files, Record Group (RG) 330 (Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD; Orders, DA, TAG 17134, 30 March 1953. **2LT Castro was the first Special Forces officer killed in combat and is memorialized on the USASOC Memorial Wall outside USASOC Headquarters on Fort Bragg, NC. A second Special Forces officer, 1LT Douglas W. Payne, was killed in action on Taehwa-do on 21 July 1953, only six days before the Armistice was signed ("Korean Conflict Casualty File," RG 330, NARA). Both received posthumous promotions.**
- 52 ORO Study, 110-114, quote from 111.
- 53 Department of the Army, Training Circular (TC) 18-01, *Special Forces Unconventional Warfare* (Washington, DC: GPO, August 2011), 3-8.
- 54 Department of the Army, FM 31-21, *Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare* (Washington, DC: GPO, October 1951), 228.
- 55 FM 31-21 (1951), 228-33.
- 56 ORO Study, 111-13, 142-44. **In WWII, Stuart was primarily involved with the Nisei (second generation Japanese-Americans) and served as the Assistant Commandant of the Military Intelligence Service Language School (1942-44), and commander of the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section. After the war, he joined the Counter Intelligence Corps. In the Korean War, he commanded the 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. By this time, the head of CCRAK was a Brigadier General. See the article "Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK)," in this issue of Veritas.**
- 57 ORO Study, 111-18, 142-44; Glenn E. Muggelberg, interview with Dr. Charles Briscoe, 23 June 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 58 ORO Study, 111-18, 142-46.
- 59 Muggelberg Interview, AHEC, 50.
- 60 Muggelberg interview, 23 June 2011; Maurice H. Price, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 12 December 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; ORO Study, 111-18, 142-46.
- 61 Muggelberg interview, 23 June 2011; Price interview, 12 December 2012; Ripley interview, 31 January 2013.
- 62 Special Operations Command - Korea, "History of Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR)," on Internet at: <http://8tharmy.korea.army.mil/SOCKOR/history.htm>, last accessed on 1 December 2012.



Guerrilla unit mustering out formation.



# Operation SPITFIRE

## No Lessons Learned

Although several authors have tried to recount the details of Operation SPITFIRE, to date none have managed to get the story straight. Because the failed airborne operation caused changes to how the guerrillas conducted similar actions afterward, it is important to fully understand the many factors that led to the debacle. This article presents a factual account of what was planned to happen, and what actually occurred during the execution of that plan. It is a synthesis of all of the facts as reported in all available primary source documentation.<sup>1</sup>

by Michael E. Krivdo



North Korean guerrilla parachute training.

At 2200 hours on 18 June 1951, a five-man pathfinder element consisting of British Army Captain (CPT) William Ellery Anderson, Ranger Sergeant (SGT) William T. Miles, Jr., SGT Charles B. Garrett (communicator), and two Koreans (Song Chang Ok and Ho Yong Chong) parachuted from a C-47 'Skytrain' into the mountains of North Korea. Problems surfaced immediately as two men (Anderson and Song) were injured in the jump and needed medical evacuation. Despite this rough start, the lead element discovered a large Chinese unit moving toward the UN lines and called in air support that inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. The second element (CPT David C. Hearn, British Second Lieutenant (2LT) Leo S. Adams-Acton, British Fusilier Calder 'George' Mills and ten Koreans) parachuted in around 0130 hours on 26 June. Hearn had been added to replace the injured Anderson as the mission commander, and the latter was evacuated by helicopter on the 28th. Meanwhile, several more men were injured in the second jump and communications problems plagued the team.<sup>2</sup>

The earlier strike on the Chinese unit and the multiple attempts to resupply, reinforce, and evacuate SPITFIRE personnel had compromised the group's location and enemy forces closed in to destroy it. Dawn airdrops by circling U.S. Air Force aircraft on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July led the enemy right to them. SGT Miles and Ho disappeared in a rear-guard action as the main body broke contact from the enemy; their bodies were never recovered. British Fusilier Mills and several Korean guerrillas met the same fate in the following days. The remainder, moving south



North Korean guerrilla 'drop' locations.



## Operation SPITFIRE: The Plan

**Phase 1 - Thunder** - Insert five-man Pathfinder team to scout and mark Drop Zones

**Phase 2 - Lightning** - Insert twelve-man augmentation team

**Phase 3 - Storm** - Insert twenty-man augmentation team

**Phase 4 - Northwind** - Insert last twenty-man augmentation team and commence operations

## Operation SPITFIRE: Actual Events

**18 June - Thunder**, SPITFIRE's Pathfinder element (5 men) parachutes into North Korea

**20 June** - Team calls air strike on Chinese division positions; good effect on targets

**21 June** - Team adjusts and repeats air strike on Chinese unit; many secondary explosions

**= 1 Day**

**26 June - Lightning**, second element (13 men) parachutes in, links up with Pathfinders

**28 June** - MEDEVAC helo extracts two men (CPT Anderson and Korean Song Chang Ok)

**30 June** - Supply drop arrives, but all chutes malfunction

**1 July** - Observer aircraft circles team and drops penicillin for injured persons

**5/6 July** - Supply plane orbits all night then drops chutes in daylight right on SPITFIRE, enemy ambushes SPITFIRE, two men fight rearguard action and disappear

**26 July** - Second and last group of survivors cross UN lines (2 men)

**25 July** - First group of survivors link up with 35th Infantry Regiment (5 men)

**7 July** - Enemy tracking main body, SPITFIRE's radios fail, group begins evading



Ranger Sergeant William T. Miles, Jr., reported as Missing in Action/Presumed Dead during Operation SPITFIRE in North Korea.

and evading capture for almost three weeks, eventually bumped into the UN lines and linked up on 25 July with security elements of Item Company, 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. Of the eighteen participants in the mission, only nine walked out or were recovered in the early medevac. SGT Miles, Fusilier Mills, and seven Koreans were never heard from again.<sup>3</sup>

After the guerrilla command's disappointing second attempt to insert forces by parachute (VIRGINIA I on 15 March 1951 was the first), the Far East Command (FEC) prohibited non-Koreans from participating in future airborne special operations. This decision had far-reaching consequences, particularly for the hundreds of anti-Communist guerrillas who were later dispatched over North Korea in similar efforts.<sup>4</sup> One fundamental problem with the decision was that it made no distinction between missions specifically designed to be long-term (i.e., deep insertions to establish 'permanent' guerrilla base camps) and shorter duration raids where deliberate withdrawals were an essential element of the planning. In issuing a blanket prohibition, the FEC staff exposed its ignorance of special operations in general and excluded experts (like the airborne-qualified Ranger infantrymen) from participating in airborne raids that they were well-qualified to accomplish.

Furthermore, the decision meant that all future participants of these operations would be newly trained individuals. Unlike American Rangers or other special operators, the guerrilla units possessed no ready pool of experienced airborne raiders. And until one survived a mission there could be no pool of experience to be sent on a second. Consequently, succeeding waves of poorly qualified, inexperienced Korean guerrillas were committed to one-way operations where none survived. Furthermore, with no feedback from survivors to determine what did or did not work, these operations constituted a 'lessons-learned nightmare' that saw one failed mission follow another. A vicious cycle began wherein at least seventeen similar operations were launched and "Not one member . . . is known to have exfiltrated."<sup>5</sup>





North Korean guerrillas conducting suspended harness parachute training.

The situation brings up a disturbing point: if Americans had participated in those later operations it seems doubtful that FEC would have continued to parachute units to their deaths like it did with the all-Korean groups. Some corrective actions would have been taken to increase the chances of recovering their personnel. Evidently, the FEC considered indigenous troops expendable and believed that by removing Americans/British from participation in missions such as these, there would no longer be a need to plan for extracts in event of emergencies.<sup>6</sup> As a result, more than 400 Korean guerrillas were parachuted into North Korea between 22 January 1952 and 19 May 1953 and none were ever seen again.<sup>7</sup> ▲

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## Endnotes

1 There are few primary source materials on Operation SPITFIRE; most of the information comes from secondary sources and third parties. And some of that material is contradictory or contains factually incorrect material. Probably the most complete single account appears in Ed[ward C.] Evanhoe, *Darkmoon: Eighth Army Special Operations in the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995), 103-16, yet it contains some inaccuracies. One specific weakness of that account is that it relies heavily on a single source, the "Sgt. C.H. Lane Diary," not available for scrutiny by historians. As such, its contents cannot be independently verified. Unfortunately, the accounts of SPITFIRE that appear in other secondary sources generally draw heavily from Evanhoe's version (of the Lane Diary) with undocumented variations, further clouding what actually happened. The few points that can be verified

in this account are derived from the essential elements of the story found in primary documentation sources such as: Letter, CPT David C. Hearn to COL John H. McGee, 6 September 1951 (hereafter Hearn Letter), COL John H. McGee Papers, Army Heritage Education Center (AHEC), Carlisle Barracks, PA; Letter, John H. McGee to Colonel Rod Paschall, San Antonio, TX, 24 March 1986 (hereafter Paschall Letter), AHEC, 22, 26-27; Frederick W. Cleaver, George Fitzpatrick, John Ponturo, *et al.*, "UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954," AFPE Group Technical Memorandum ORO-T-64, Johns Hopkins University, Operations Research Office, June 1956 (hereafter ORO Study), 92-94, 155.

2 Hearn Letter; ORO Study, 52-53, 62-64, 74-76, 90-95; Second Supplement, *London Gazette*, 7 October 1952, 5323; National Archives, United Kingdom, Reference WO 373/116/53, 1950-1953; Alex McVeigh, "Korean War hero receives Distinguished Service Cross," *Army News Service*, 24 April 2009; DSC Citation for Sgt William T. Miles, Jr.; Evanhoe, *Darkmoon*, 108-09.

3 Every published account of SPITFIRE is frustrating because each provides different casualty figures/participant numbers that range from none out of a total party of sixteen (ORO Study, 52) to thirteen dead out of eighteen (Dillard, *Aviary*, 32-37). Other accounts suggest two casualties out of eighteen members (Evanhoe, *Darkmoon*, 111-15), eight out of sixteen (Malcom, *White Tigers*, 135) and eight out of eighteen (Haas, *Devil's Shadow*, 58-59). Although the most accurate assessment seems to be Evanhoe's, he neglects to account properly for the addition of Hearn and collate the Korean members of the team. More distressingly, most completely miss the contributions of Fusilier Mills, missing in action and presumed dead while on the mission ("List of Royal Northumberland Fusiliers Killed in Korea," on internet at: [http://www.fusiliers-association.co.uk/Northumberland/RNF\\_Killed\\_in\\_Korea.htm](http://www.fusiliers-association.co.uk/Northumberland/RNF_Killed_in_Korea.htm), last accessed on 7 January 2013). Most accounts simply recap the events from Evanhoe's version, with some variance in details of the mission. All provide vague cites of sources, most of which are not available for inspection. The casualty figures in this article are derived between those known to have inserted for the mission and those returned to friendly lines as cited in Hearn's letter to McGee, a contemporary document written in the aftermath of the mission by a leader-participant (Hearn Letter, 1-3).

4 ORO Study, 52-53, 62-64, 74-76, 90-95.

5 ORO Study, 90-95, quote from 91.

6 The independent post-war analysis contained in ORO Study, 94, frankly concluded that the "decisions to use partisans . . . in airborne operations appears to have been futile and callous." This author agrees with that assessment.

7 ORO Study, 91-94.





# Major Jay D. Vanderpool

## Advisor to the Philippine Guerrillas

By Michael E. Krivdo

*“Don’t go jumping into taking on the Japanese Army by yourselves, because if you are wiped out you are no good to anyone.”<sup>1</sup>*

— MAJ Jay D. Vanderpool

One of the most important leaders in the U.S. Army’s guerrilla warfare campaign during the Korean War was Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Jay D. Vanderpool. Fortunately for the Korean guerrillas and the U.S. Army, LTC Vanderpool ‘cut his teeth’ on guerrilla operations while serving as an advisor to several Philippine groups fighting Japanese occupation forces during WWII. Although every guerrilla warfare situation is different, the experiences gained by Vanderpool in the field while being relentlessly pursued by the enemy gave him valuable insight into the unique problems faced by insurgents fighting to free their land from oppressors. He fully understood the complexities of guerrilla warfare and put knowledge gained in the Philippines to good use in Korea.

Born in Wetumka, Oklahoma, in 1917, Jay D. Vanderpool attended high school during the Depression and enlisted in the Army in 1936. Reaching the rank of staff sergeant in the Field Artillery, Vanderpool attended Officer Candidate School and earned an Army Reserve commission as a second lieutenant (2LT) on 5 April 1941. Assigned to the 8<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, 2LT Vanderpool survived the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and fought at Guadalcanal with the 11<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment and the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (ID). From battalion S-2, he quickly worked his way up to Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), Intelligence (G-2), 25<sup>th</sup> ID in the assault landing at Kolombangara during the Solomons campaign. When the division moved to New Caledonia in early 1944 to prepare for the invasion of the Philippines, Major (MAJ) Vanderpool sought greater challenges.<sup>2</sup>

At that time, General (GEN) Douglas A. MacArthur’s headquarters in Australia became aware of the existence of several Philippine guerrilla organizations. To gain intelligence for the invasion of the Philippines, MacArthur’s G-2, Major General (MG) Charles A. Willoughby, created the Philippine Regional Section (PRS) to impose control and direction over the nebulous guerrilla network. Established on 15 May 1943, the PRS was directed by

COL Courtney Whitney, a former Manila lawyer and “MacArthur’s trusted personal advisor.”<sup>3</sup> As the planned invasion became imminent in late 1944, Whitney recruited and trained hundreds of individuals to serve as advisors to the many guerrilla units scattered throughout the 7,000 island archipelago. By October 1944, the PRS had inserted over 400 ‘agents’ (both U.S. and Filipino) into the islands. They fed vital information back to Willoughby’s analysts concerning enemy dispositions.<sup>4</sup>

For his part, MAJ Vanderpool volunteered in September 1944 for a “highly hazardous program” and was selected for the PRS.<sup>5</sup> After an intensive training course covering the establishment of intelligence networks and long-range communication systems, Vanderpool became one of sixteen “especially trained and equipped parties” dispatched to select resistance groups in the Philippines.<sup>6</sup> With the vague guidance to “do what you think will best further the Allied cause,” Vanderpool boarded the attack submarine USS *Cero* (SS-225) bound for Luzon. After two aborted linkup attempts, the *Cero* reached the mouth of the Masanga River in East Luzon the night of 2 November 1944 and Vanderpool rowed ashore to a remote jungle beach. There, he linked up with his initial contact, Army



The USS *Cero* (SS-225) delivered fourteen soldiers and twenty tons of cargo in three separate covert landings on Luzon in the Philippines between 25 October and 2 November 1944.

(U.S. Navy photo)



Air Corps LTC Bernard L. Anderson, leader of a local guerrilla unit. Afterwards, he spent several days moving from house to house and church to church, until he finally arrived at the guerrilla encampment to begin his mission.<sup>7</sup>

MAJ Vanderpool served as MacArthur's link with the several guerrilla units that operated in the Southern Luzon Sector, an area south of Manila spanning the Laguna-Cavite-Batangas area. His principal concern was 'Hunter's (ROTC) Guerrillas,' led by former Philippine Army Cadet Eleuterio L. 'Terry' Adevosio (alias Terry Magtangol) in the region south of Manila. Characterized by Willoughby as the "most powerful guerrillas," many of the Hunter's group had been sergeants or officers in the Philippine Scouts and the rest, cadets in the Filipino military academy. Vanderpool assumed responsibility for several other small guerrilla units in the area, a region key to seizing the capital city of Manila.<sup>8</sup>

Vanderpool defined his role as 'coordinator,' advisor, and mentor to the guerrillas while supporting their

operations in the field. He encouraged 'his' guerrillas to collect information on the enemy and personally relayed their reports to MacArthur's headquarters. Vanderpool was the conduit for gaining the weapons, ammunition, and supplies that the guerrillas needed to function, and to gain recognition as patriots. More importantly, his fighters produced results. MAJ Vanderpool skillfully used his personality to exercise authority, persuading the guerrillas to put aside parochial differences and agendas to support American requirements.<sup>9</sup>

Vanderpool lived with the Filipino irregulars for five months, regularly moving among several disparate units to coordinate actions and avoid being captured by the Japanese. His influence expanded as he gradually took full charge. In late 1944 he formed his own General Guerrilla Command (GGC). The increased role of the GGC led Japanese intelligence officers to conclude that Vanderpool was a major general in command of multiple guerrilla units and they expended great time and energy



On Luzon Philippine guerrillas turn over two Japanese prisoners of war (POWs) to soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division





Original aerial photograph of the Los Baños concentration camp. This photo has been annotated to bring out details that aided in the planning of the combined rescue operation.

to find him. Furthermore, Vanderpool's fighters provided quality information, making them invaluable to MacArthur's command after the U.S. landings on Luzon in January 1945.<sup>10</sup>

On several occasions Vanderpool's guerrillas conducted significant combat operations. During the Los Baños raid (the rescue of 2,146 Allied prisoners in February 1945), Vanderpool assisted the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division staff to plan the operation and directed his men to clandestinely pass instruction to the prisoners so they could get ready. Vanderpool's guerrillas provided detailed information on the prison and served as 'eyes on target' for the attacking forces. Afterward, his men supported the division as they mopped up Japanese forces.<sup>11</sup>

On 15 April 1945, MAJ Vanderpool returned to his parent unit, the 25<sup>th</sup> ID. His knowledge of the Filipino culture, language, and geography proved extremely useful during fierce fighting at Balete Pass and Cagayan Valley in Northeastern Luzon. He remained with the division until February 1947, when he was seconded to the Central Intelligence Group, predecessor to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In that capacity he became an

expert on the North Korean military buildup. Vanderpool left the CIA and Korea in August of 1950 to attend the Artillery Officers Advanced Course before returning to Asia in June 1951 as an Intelligence Staff Officer in the FEC G-2 section in Tokyo, Japan.<sup>12</sup>

Vanderpool found the duties in the FEC G-2 to be "mostly paper work, rather dull."<sup>13</sup> He began looking around for something more challenging. "There was an opening to take charge of the partisan forces in Korea."<sup>14</sup> Acting quickly, "I negotiated a deal with the fellow who had the partisan job, who didn't like it . . . , so arrangements were made for us to swap places. That's the way I got to Korea" in December 1951, again leading guerrillas less than seven years after leaving his Filipino fighters.<sup>15</sup> Vanderpool remained the commander of the EUSA guerrillas for sixteen months before departing Korea for good in April 1953. Throughout his tenure, he capably led the 'partisans' and American advisors and trainers, providing excellent guidance and leadership.<sup>16</sup> COL Vanderpool was one of only a handful of American officers to command significant guerrilla groups in two major wars. ▲



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## Endnotes

- 1 Senior Officers Oral History Program, Vanderpool Collection, U.S. Army Heritage Education Center (AHEC), Carlisle Barracks, PA (hereafter Vanderpool Interview), 103.
- 2 U.S. Government, Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940*, Roll T627\_4589, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, DC, page 140A; "Record of Assignments," Service Record of Jay D. Vanderpool (hereafter "Vanderpool Service Record"), National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), St. Louis, MO; DA Form 66, "Vanderpool Service Record"; Vanderpool Interview, 5, 11-13, 16-17, 33-49, 61-62, 77-82.
- 3 MG Charles A. Willoughby, comp., *The Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines: 1941-1945* (New York: Vantage Press, 1972), 44-45, quote from 44.
- 4 Peter T. Sinclair, II, "Men of Destiny: The American and Filipino Guerrillas during the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines" (Fort Leavenworth, KS: School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2011), 39-41; David W. Hogan, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Operations in World War II* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, Department of the Army, 1992), 78-81.
- 5 Hogan, *Army Special Operations in World War II*, 78-81, quote from 80; *Reports of General MacArthur*, vol. 1, *The Campaigns of MacArthur in the Pacific* ([1966], reprinted; Washington, DC: GPO, 1994), 304-09; Vanderpool Interview, quote from 84.
- 6 "Record of Assignments," Vanderpool Service Record; Hogan, *Army Special Operations in World War II*, 80; Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines*, 203, quote from text.
- 7 "Record of Assignments," Vanderpool Service Record; Paul M. Edwards, *Korean War Almanac*, Almanacs of American Wars series (New York: Facts on File, Inc, 2006), 222; Hogan, *U.S. Army Special Operations in World War II*, 80; Letter, Vanderpool to Headquarters, Philippine-Ryukyus Command, 5 August 1947, Jay D. Vanderpool Collection, Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC), Carlisle, PA, quote from text; Vanderpool Interview, 88-90, 93-94; Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines*, 203-204. For information related to the use of submarines to supply the guerrillas, see: The Navy Department Library, Online Reading Room, "Submarine Activities Connected with Guerrilla Organizations," on Internet at: [http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/pi\\_sub\\_guerrillas.htm](http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/pi_sub_guerrillas.htm), last accessed on 31 October 2012.
- 8 Hogan, *Army Special Operations in World War II*, 80; Letter, Vanderpool to Headquarters, Philippine-Ryukyus Command, 5 August 1947, Vanderpool Collection, AHEC; Willoughby, *Guerrilla Resistance Movement in the Philippines*, 203-04, 461-63, quote from 204; Vanderpool Interview, 94-96, 123.
- 9 "Record of Assignments," Vanderpool Service Record; Hogan, *U.S. Army Special Operations in World War II*, 80; U.S. Army, "Recognition Program of Philippine Guerrillas," HQ, Philippine Command, U.S. Army, 30-32; Vanderpool Interview, 100-101, 123, 127-31.
- 10 Hogan, *U.S. Army Special Operations in World War II*, 80; Vanderpool Interview, 118-19, 126-33. **In an interview given after he retired, Vanderpool said that he believed the Japanese intelligence personnel concluded he was a major general based on captured documents from Vanderpool's headquarters. He always signed his official correspondence with: "Jay D. Vanderpool, Major, General Staff Corps." That must have been erroneously translated for the Japanese officers as: "Jay D. Vanderpool, Major General, Staff Corps"** (Vanderpool Interview, 118-19, quotes from 119).
- 11 Vanderpool Interview, 127-31; Vanderpool Service Record; Edward M. Flanagan, Jr., *The Los Baños Raid: The 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Jumps at Dawn* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986), 74-82; Gordon Rottman, *The Los Baños Prison Camp Raid: The Philippines, 1945* (New York, NY: Osprey Publishing, 2010), 29-35; Robert Ross Smith, *Triumph in the Philippines, U.S. Army in World War II, War in the Pacific series* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1993), 273-74; Floyd Sheldon, *The Fundamentals of Leadership: Essential Tools of the Trade* (Tucson, AZ: Wheatmark, 2010), 55-56.
- 12 Telegram, TAG Washington, DC, to WUX Chicago, IL, 13 March 1947, for LTC Jay D. Vanderpool, Vanderpool Collection, AHEC; Vanderpool Service Record; Vanderpool Interview, 132-137; Michael Warner, "The Creation of the Central Intelligence Group: Salvation and Liquidation," published online at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-intelligence/.../v39i5a13p.pdf>, last accessed on 12 December 2012.
- 13 Vanderpool Interview, 137.
- 14 Vanderpool Interview, 137.
- 15 Vanderpool Interview, 137-38.
- 16 Vanderpool Service Record.



Aerial photograph of some of the Los Baños prison camp barracks taken during the rescue operation. Note that the amphibious tractors used to transport the rescued prisoners of war (POWs) are visible in the lower left corner.



Chinese crewmen pose in front of one of the Soviet made Tu 2 Bat bombers that survived the disastrous daylight attack on Taehwa do on 30 November 1951.



# Fight for the Northwestern Islands

## September-December 1951

by Michael E. Krivdo

This article provides greater detail on the events of the fight for the guerrilla-held northwest islands. The 'Battle of Taehwa-do,' as some books refer to it, reflected the new interest that Far East Command (FEC) placed on keeping those islands under friendly control. It reveals how the important those islands were for FEC elements that used them as a base for gaining early warning and intelligence on the enemy. As seen in other articles in this issue, possession of the northwest islands provided the FEC with safe areas where rescue assets like helicopters and boats could be employed to recover downed pilots or aircrew.<sup>1</sup> As a result of the fight for control of those islands, FEC reorganized its forces to better defend the islands in the future and island defense became an implied task for all guerrilla units.

On the night of 5 November 1951, Chinese Communists landed on the guerrilla-held islands of Ka-do and T'an-do, only forty miles southeast of the mouth of the Yalu River. Supported by nine Tu-2 *Bat* bombers and sixteen prop-driven La-11 *Fang* fighters backed by MiG-15 jets, the Communists quickly drove the guerrillas off the islands, forcing them to flee ten miles in fishing boats to their main

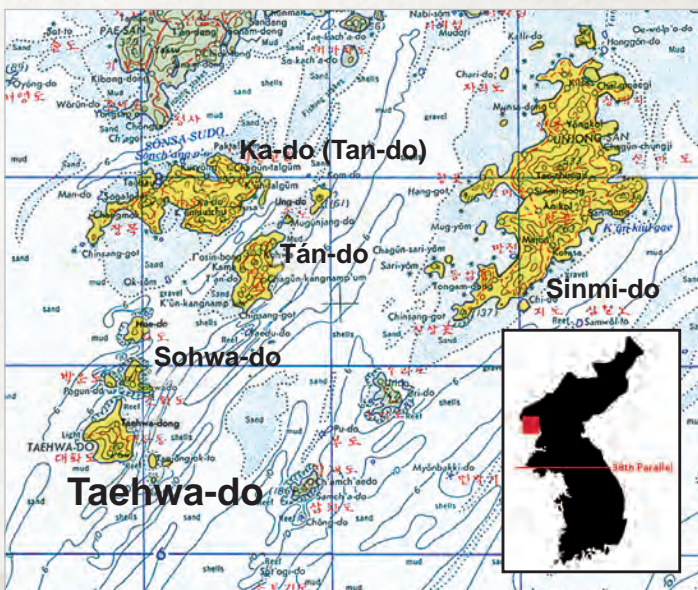
base on Taehwa-do. Little more than a week later, on 15 November, eleven enemy bombers hit friendly positions on Taehwa-do in a daylight attack to soften them up for an assault. The commander of Task Force (TF) TAEHWA-DO, British second lieutenant (2LT) Leo S. Adams-Acton (earlier on Operation SPITFIRE), quickly discerned the pattern and directed his guerrillas to improve their defensive positions. Adams-Acton also reported the developments to his commander at TF LEOPARD on Paengnyong Island, requesting naval gunfire and air support assets to help him defend against the impending attack. The British Destroyer HMS *Cossack* (D-57) proceeded to the island and Air Force planners prepared their own surprise for the Chinese.<sup>2</sup>

Beginning on 16 November, the Chinese Air Force bombed Taehwa nightly, methodically working over the guerrilla positions. When the *Cossack* arrived, it provided Adams-Acton with two British Royal Marine naval gunfire spotters and radios to efficiently call and adjust the ship's four 4.5-inch guns from Taehwa-do. Adams-Acton then planned and executed a raid on Ka-do on the night of 24-25 November to keep the Communists off-balance. The raiders, backed by accurate naval gunfire from the *Cossack*, swiftly landed and caught the Chinese by surprise. The guerillas inflicted damage to the enemy and carried away several prisoners who confirmed the enemy's intent to seize Taehwa-do.<sup>3</sup>

While the guerrillas were raiding Ka-do, Chinese troops landed on nearby Sohwa-do (a small island northeast of Taehwa-do) and quickly pushed the men of Donkey 13 off the tiny island. The survivors withdrew to Taehwa-do, where Adams-Acton fitted them into his defensive scheme. Meanwhile, nightly Communist airstrikes by up to a dozen Chinese Tu-2s continued.<sup>4</sup> Things were rapidly coming to a head in the northern islands.

The main Chinese assault on Taehwa Island began just before midnight on 29 November. Small folding wooden boats transited between the islands and disgorged Chinese assault troops in the initial waves, followed closely by a *sampan* fleet fitted with mortars and rockets. Once ashore, the disoriented but determined Communists fought their way inland as Adams-Acton's men called and adjusted naval gunfire into the massed formations. Fighting continued throughout the night and into the next day. Meanwhile, the Far East Air Force planned a trap of its own in what would become one of the largest air battles in the war.<sup>5</sup>

Original tactical map of the Taehwa-do area, about forty miles southeast of the mouth of the Yalu River that separates the People's Republic of China from North Korea. Note the locations of the surrounding island groups: Ka-do (Tan-do), T'an-do, Sohwa-do, and Sinmi-do.





When the attacking Chinese soldiers called for a daylight air strike against the guerrillas, a group of twelve Tu-2 bombers and sixteen La-11 fighters left their bases north of the Yalu River and sprinted toward Taehwa-do. But this time the Americans had anticipated that action and were waiting to pounce. As the bombers crossed into North Korean airspace and proceeded to their target, a prepositioned group of thirty-one American F-86 *Sabre* jets dropped out of the clouds behind them. Calling "Come down and get 'em," the mission commander, Air Force Colonel (COL) Benjamin S. Preston, Jr., led the attack on the unsuspecting Chinese aviators.<sup>6</sup> "Everybody was going wild," one F-86 pilot reported. "The sky must have been chock-full of lead. Planes were smoking, there were splashes below, and radio fight-talk was intense. It was the damndest violent action I ever saw – kill-or-be-killed destruction!"<sup>7</sup> Eighteen Communist MiG-15s soon joined the fight but could not stop the slaughter. In the end the Air Force shot down eight Tu-2s, three La-11s, and one MiG-15, damaging and scattering the rest. The Chinese Air Force never again attempted a daylight bombing raid in Korea.<sup>8</sup>

On the ground, the Chinese fought hard for the island even as their negotiators returned to the table at Kaesong and settled on a line of demarcation that curiously avoided any mention of the northwest islands.<sup>9</sup> Adams-Acton and his men put up a determined stand backed by occasional air support and responsive gunfire from two destroyers, the *Cossack* and the HMS *Cockade* (D-34). His two British naval gunfire spotters moved along the lines, accurately adjusting deadly fires onto the massed enemy. Yet despite their losses, the Chinese steadily pushed the guerrillas into a pocket on the south end of the island.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, just after 0200 hours on 1 December, the island fell. Guerrillas fled the island by boats, rafts, and even walked the reefs south as far as they could go to avoid the Chinese. In the final stages of the fight Adams-Acton, two British naval gunfire spotters, and American Sergeant First Class Charles B. Brock, Jr., were trapped in a bunker and could not evacuate. They were captured and sent to a North Korean POW camp. 2LT Adams-Acton was later executed by North Korean guards while escaping a month before the other three were repatriated during Operation BIG SWITCH (August 1953).<sup>11</sup>

The guerrillas had valiantly fought for the islands. FEC ordered them to be retaken. Within a month the guerrillas had captured Taehwa-do and its outlying islands. This time the guerrillas held it for a year before evacuating it as part of the Armistice deal. But the temporary loss of Taehwa-do and the northwestern islands led to another effort to reorganize Army guerrilla operations. ♣

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## Endnotes

- 1 See the article: Michael E. Krivdo, "E&E: West Coast Aircraft Recovery and the Guerrilla-Held Islands," xx, in this issue of *Veritas*; Kenneth P. Werrell, *Sabres over MiG Alley: The F-86 and the Battle for Air Superiority in Korea* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 104-106.
- 2 Frederick W. Cleaver, George Fitzpatrick, John Ponturo, et al., "UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954," AFPE Group Technical Memorandum ORO-T-64, Johns Hopkins University, Operations Research Office, June 1956 (hereafter ORO Study), 34, 155; Ed[ward C.] Evanhoe, *Darkmoon: Eighth Army Special Operations in the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995), 130-31; ChineseDefence.Com, "Bloody Ride to Taehwa-do Island - the PLAAF's Costly Defeat over Korea," 3 August 2011, on Internet at: <http://www.chinesedefence.com/forums/chinese-air-force/629-bloody-ride-taehwa-do-island-plaafs-costly-defeat-over-korea.html>, last accessed on 6 February 2013; Werrell, *Sabres over MiG Alley*, 107. **Ed Evanhoe's version misidentifies some of the islands and has the timing of the attacks wrong. The dates used in this article are based on the actual combat reports from the engagement and not on the filing of the report. In addition, because the northwest islands were less than ten minutes flying time from the Chinese airbases at Antung, the bombing of Taehwa-do was the first reported employment of Soviet-made Tu-2 bombers during the war;** (James A. Field, Jr., *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* [Washington, DC: GPO, 1962], 423).
- 3 Werrell, *Sabres over MiG Alley*, 107; U.S. Navy Historical Division, "Korean War: Chronology of U.S. Pacific Fleet Operations, July-December 1951," entry for 24-25 November 1951, available on the Internet at: <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron51b.htm#sept>, last accessed 10 December 2012; Paul M. Edwards, *Korean War Almanac* (New York: InfoBase Publishing, 2006), 254; Evanhoe, *Darkmoon*, 130.
- 4 U.S. Navy, "Korean War: Chronology of U.S. Pacific Fleet Operations, July-December 1951," entry for 6 November 1951; Goldhamer, *1951 Korean Armistice Conference*, 141-42.
- 5 Werrell, *Sabres over MiG Alley*, 107-108; Pacific Air Force, "This Week in USAF and PACAF History 26 November – 2 December 2012," on the Internet at: [www.pacaf.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-121126-042.pdf](http://www.pacaf.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-121126-042.pdf), last accessed on 6 February 2013, 2.
- 6 Werrell, *Sabres over MiG Alley*, 108-109, quote from 108.
- 7 Werrell, *Sabres over MiG Alley*, 108-109, quotes from text.
- 8 Werrell, *Sabres over MiG Alley*, 108-109, quotes from text; Pacific Air Force, "This Week in USAF and PACAF History 26 November – 2 December 2012," 2; 51; Edwards, *Korean War Almanac*, 260-61. **Two USAF F-86 fighter pilots (MAJ George A. Davis, Jr. and MAJ Winton W. 'Bones' Marshall) became 'aces' as a result of their victories in the fight over Taehwa-do. MAJ Davis earned the honor of becoming the first American pilot to become an ace in two wars (WWII and Korea).**
- 9 Walter G. Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front, United States Army in the Korean War* ([1965], reprinted; Washington, DC: GPO, Center of Military History, 1973), 179-81. **In what became a familiar pattern, the Chinese and North Korean forces utilized the breaks in Armistice negotiations to strengthen their positions. In this instance, the Communists actively sought to break off talks to seize the guerrilla-held islands on their weak flank.**
- 10 U.S. Navy, "Korean War: Chronology of U.S. Pacific Fleet Operations, July-December 1951," entry for 29 November and 1 December 1951; Edwards, *Korean War Almanac*, 260-61; Evanhoe, *Darkmoon*, 131-33.
- 11 U.S. Navy, "Korean War: Chronology of U.S. Pacific Fleet Operations, July-December 1951," entry for 29 November and 1 December 1951; Edwards, *Korean War Almanac*, 260-61; N.a., "Big Switch is Open," *Life*, 17 August 1953, 22-23; Evanhoe, *Darkmoon*, 131-33; "Korean Repatriated POWs," on Internet at: [http://oktibbeha.msghn.org/Korea/Korean\\_Repatriated\\_POWS3.html](http://oktibbeha.msghn.org/Korea/Korean_Repatriated_POWS3.html), last accessed on 12 December 2012. **British 1LT Adams-Acton was executed by North Korean guards at the Camp Two POW compound on 16 July 1953. Adams-Acton and another guerrilla command officer, 1LT Albert W. Naylor-Foote, captured on the East Coast in February 1952, had planned an escape in the early morning before muster. Naylor-Foote hit a guard on the head with a rock, but failed to knock him unconscious. The guard recovered and alerted other guards who chased Adams-Acton and deliberately shot him, killing him instantly. Naylor-Foote managed to hide while the guards were focused on Adams-Acton. Naylor-Foote avoided any punishment for his role in the escape attempt and was repatriated a month later during Operation BIG SWITCH. On 13 April 1954, the British War Office commended 1LT Adams-Acton for his "gallant and distinguished services" as a POW. See; "List of Royal Northumberland Fusiliers Killed in Korea," on internet at: [http://www.fusiliers-association.co.uk/Northumberland/RNF\\_Killed\\_in\\_Korea.htm](http://www.fusiliers-association.co.uk/Northumberland/RNF_Killed_in_Korea.htm), last accessed on 2 January 2013; *London Gazette*, 13 April 1954, 2207, quote from text; Harry E. Ettinger, interview by Jared M. Tracy, 17 November 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Defense Prisoner of War-Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), Korean War Aircraft Loss Database (KORWALD), Loss Incident Summary 520202, available on the Internet at: <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/korea/reports/air/>, last accessed on 8 February 2013; S[imon]. P. MacKenzie, *British Prisoners of the Korean War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 119-20.**



## THE INSIGNIA OF

# WOLFPACK

By Michael E. Krivdo

### UNIT PATCHES

Some American advisors went to great lengths to bring a sense of military organization and hierarchy to these irregular guerrilla units. In addition to providing standard uniform items, they also created unit-specific items to enhance cohesion, *esprit de corps*, and to differentiate between the many guerrilla elements.<sup>1</sup> Examples of some patches adopted in Task Force WOLFPACK are shown.



**WOLFPACK 7**



**WOLFPACK 5**



**WOLFPACK 4 VARIATIONS:** Note the small differences in color and design. There is no numeral 4 on this patch. In Korean culture, it is considered unlucky to represent a person or unit with the number 4, since the pronunciation of that number ('sa') sounds like the word for death.



**WOLFPACK 6 VARIATIONS**



**WOLFPACK 3**



**WOLFPACK 8 VARIATIONS**



## RANK

The American advisor to Wolfpack 1 on Kanghwa-do, First Lieutenant (1LT) Frederick G. Speidel, incorporated another degree of military formality by creating rank insignia for their uniforms. Posted mainly in a defensive role on Kanghwa-do, Wolfpack 1 shared its right flank with ROK Army troops. 1LT Speidel believed that rank insignia gave the guerrillas credibility and parity with ROK Army counterparts.<sup>2</sup> Formalizing rank insignia provided a readily visible sign of authority during a time (late 1952) when the units were expanding with new recruits.



**WOLFPACK 1  
COMMANDER**



**WOLFPACK 1 VICE  
COMMANDER**



**WOLFPACK 1 VICE  
REGIMENTAL  
COMMANDER**



**WOLFPACK 1  
BATTALION  
COMMANDER**



**VICE BATTALION  
COMMANDER**



**COMPANY  
COMMANDER**



**COMPANY VICE  
COMMANDER)**



**PLATOON  
COMMANDER**



**SQUAD LEADER**



**GUERRILLA  
FIRST CLASS**



**GUERRILLA**

## SKILL QUALIFICATION BADGES

Special parachutist wings were created to distinguish those guerrillas who completed parachute training with the guerrilla command's BAKER Section. One parachutist badge (left) was issued to those guerrillas who completed basic airborne training. Many of those parachute-qualified guerrillas were later transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> Partisan Airborne Infantry Regiment (1<sup>st</sup> PAIR). Another insignia was designed for those guerrillas who had received training as agents and would be inserted via parachute (center). A third badge was created for guerrilla raiders who went into North Korea by boat (right).



**KOREAN GUERRILLA  
AIRBORNE INFANTRY BADGE**



**KOREAN GUERRILLA AGENT  
OPERATIONS BADGE**



**KOREAN GUERRILLA  
SALAMANDER BADGE**

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Richard M. Ripley, interviewed by Dr. Michael E. Krivdo and Mr. Eugene G. Piasecki, 31 January 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Email correspondence, COL Richard M. Ripley (Ret.) and Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 13 May 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.

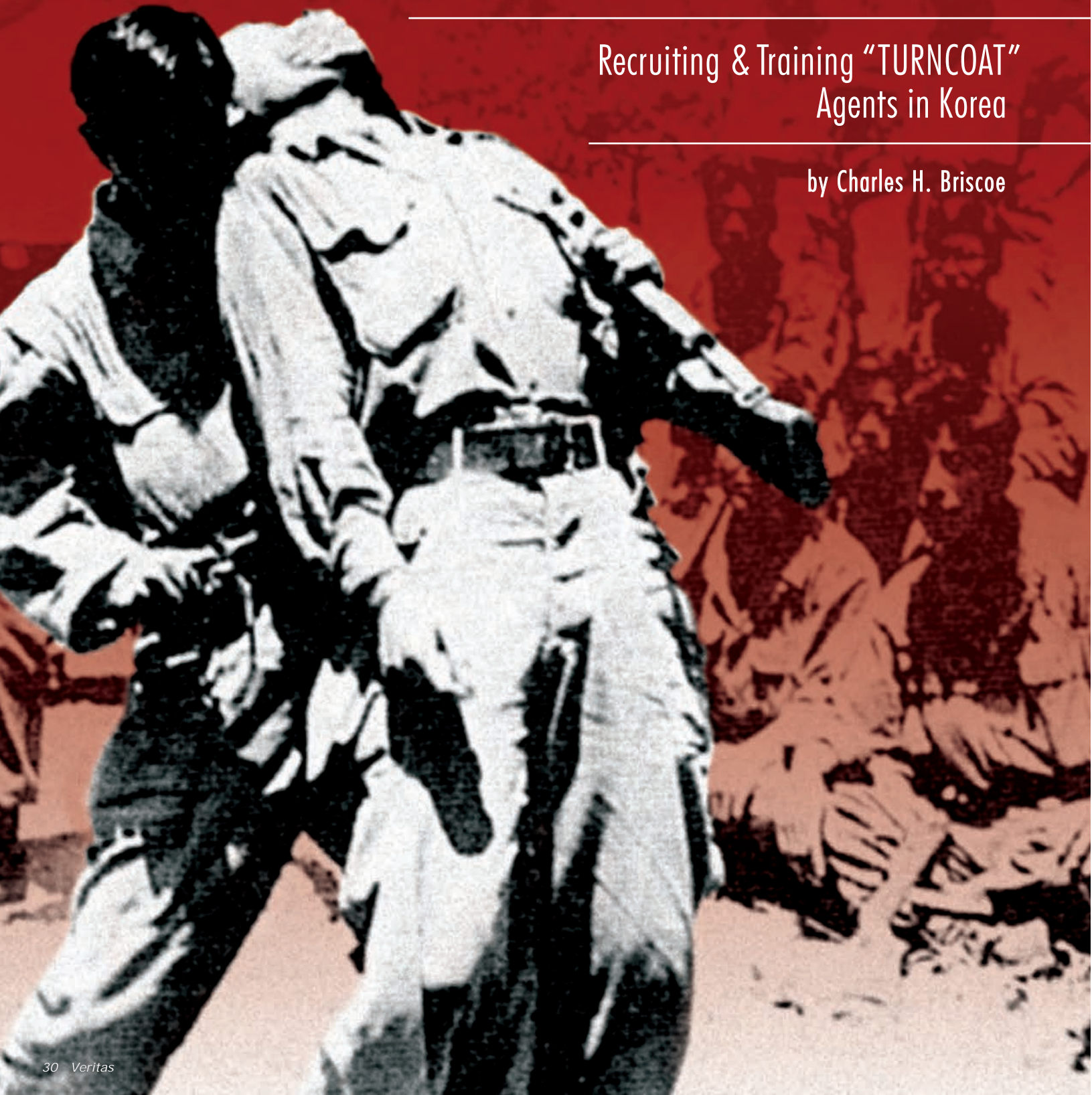
<sup>2</sup> Ripley interview, 31 January 2013; Email correspondence, COL Richard M. Ripley (Ret.) and Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, 13 May 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.



# *Culture, Language* **& SPECIAL OPS**

Recruiting & Training "TURNCOAT"  
Agents in Korea

by Charles H. Briscoe





**W**orld War Two veteran Major (MAJ) Jack T. Young, Deputy G-2 (Intelligence), 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division (2<sup>nd</sup> ID) organized, trained, and led an indigenous security element that collected tactical intelligence, handled refugees, and countered guerrilla activities during the Korean War. Called the Ivanhoe Security Force (ISF), Young's unit was also point element for Task Force (TF) INDIANHEAD, the Eighth U.S. Army intelligence exploitation team sent to North Korea's capital. The ISF entered P'yongyang on 18 October 1950 interspersed amongst the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, the lead element of the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic of Korea (ROK) Division.<sup>1</sup> The commander, Colonel (COL) Paik Sun-yup, who had grown up in the city protected by two large rivers, positioned his engineer boats behind the lead regiment because he expected the bridges to be destroyed. Paik's omniscience enabled the engineers to quickly overcome the obstacles. The 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, commanded by Major General (MG) Hobart R. Gay, unable to get into the Communist capital because his boats trailed the main column, would not allow any Americans to get ahead of his advance. Undeterred, the multi-lingual Young, arranged to blend his ISF troops among Paik's lead element. He arranged the subterfuge in Mandarin, the preferred language of senior ROK officers who had been trained by the Japanese for service in Manchuria.<sup>2</sup>

This article describes how a Chinese-American officer used cultural aspects and language to rebuild the ISF, to insure solid rapport with the ROK division commanders of X Corps, and to train Chinese Communist Forces (CCF)



**COL Paik Sun-yup was the most decorated South Korean soldier in the war. After service as the Chairman, ROK Armed Forces, he retired as a four-star general.**



**1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division  
Republic of Korea Army SSI**

prisoners of war (POW) as intelligence agents for Far East Command (FEC). This last mission enabled MAJ Young to propose that certain CCF POWs (forcibly conscripted Nationalist Army veterans) be offered repatriation in Formosa. It was the virtual destruction of the ISF at Kunu-ri in late November 1950 that caused him to use cultural



## MAJ Jack T. Young

A Chinese-American born in Kona, Hawaii on 13 November 1910, Jack Theodore Young lived most of his early life in China. After graduating with a business degree from Fu Tan University (Shanghai) in 1936, he returned to the States. When the Japanese attacked China, Young left New York to fight for his family homeland. He attended the Kuomintang (KMT) Military Academy at Whampoa before leading Nationalist units against the Japanese and Communists until December 1943. Then, as a U.S. citizen serving with Allied forces, Young was mandatorily commissioned in the U.S. Army Reserve. Thus, on 17 December 1943,

Chinese Nationalist Brigadier Young, who was fighting guerrillas in Shantung Province, became First Lieutenant (1LT) Young, Adjutant General Corps (AGC) with orders to Burma.<sup>3</sup> Fluent in Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and several Asian dialects, 1LT Young was sent to Lieutenant General (LTG) Joseph W. Stilwell as his aide-de-camp. Following the war, Captain (CPT) Young met the leading Communists in Asia, Mao Tse-tung, Chou En-lai, and Kim Il-Sung, during his service in the U.S. Military Mission to China.<sup>4</sup> As the interpreter/aide for General George C. Marshall during his postwar China mission, Young became acquainted with COL Laurence B. Keiser. It was he (MG Keiser, commanding the 2<sup>nd</sup> ID at Fort Lewis, WA) who recruited Young for the 'Indianhead' Division before it left for Korea in July 1950.<sup>5</sup>



**China-Burma-India  
Theater SSI**



**2nd Infantry  
Division SSI**



knowledge and linguistics to reconstitute this special operations element.

The U.S.-led indigenous ISF was virtually destroyed by the CCF when it tried to cover the withdrawal of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ID command group as it moved through a seven-mile long 'gauntlet of fire ambushes' (small arms reinforced by heavy mortars) on 30 November 1950.<sup>6</sup> By the time the 'Indianhead' Division reached the safety of Kunu-ri on 1 December, it had lost a third of its soldiers (5,000 officers and troops), sixty-four pieces of artillery, hundreds of trucks, tractors, and trailers, and almost all engineer and signal equipment. Rendered combat ineffective, the 2<sup>nd</sup> ID was put in reserve and MG Keiser was relieved.<sup>7</sup>

The Korean troops of the ISF, mistaken for enemy by American ground and UN air forces at Kunu-ri, were also decimated. MAJ Young and only one of the original four U.S. Army non-commissioned officers (NCO), Corporal (CPL) L. Carl Heesch, survived the debacle. CPL Carl Parsons and Sergeant (SGT) Joseph A. 'Moose' Thompson were killed in the fighting. SGT Emmett V. Parker, was missing in action, presumed dead. In reality, a wounded Parker had been captured by the Chinese.<sup>8</sup>

While EUSA reconstituted the 2<sup>nd</sup> ID, MAJ Young recruited American and Korean volunteers for a new and larger ISF having a headquarters and service company (HSC) for command & control, communications, supply, and



(L) A post-battle Chinese Communist assault was staged beside the abandoned, burned 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division vehicles and equipment (R) that had been caught in the CCF 'fire ambushes' along the road to Kunu-ri in late November 1950.



Ivanhoe Security Force leaders (front L to R): SGT Emmett V. Parker, CPL Joseph Howard, unidentified Korean, MAJ Jack T. Young (with Korean ISF mascot, 'Joe'), CPL L. Carl Heesch, unidentified Korean, and CPL Joseph F. 'Moose' Thompson with the M-1 Garand with rifle grenade attachment.



administration, an infantry rifle company for assault missions, and a security company. Twenty U.S. Army NCOs were selected to cadre eight hundred KATUSA (Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army) soldiers and to supervise a hundred Korean Labor Service (KLS) volunteers.<sup>9</sup> Young arranged specialized training from 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne). In June 1951, Second Lieutenant (2LT) William M. Cole and several Ranger sergeants taught combat marksmanship, care and operation of Soviet, Chinese, and Japanese weapons, small unit raids, and sabotage operations.<sup>10</sup> After creating a new, larger ISF, MAJ Young modified his internal training courses to accommodate a group of 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> ROK Division junior leaders from the Korean units assigned to the U.S. X Corps.<sup>11</sup>

Presenting this special guerrilla course to twenty-one ROKA lieutenants and sergeants was MAJ Young, 2LT Cole, and SGT Robert W. Morgan. Originally slated for 20-27 June 1951, the course was extended until 3 July. They taught classes in close combat techniques, stalking, map reading, compass navigation, first aid, demolitions, planning and conducting raids, security, night marksmanship, intelligence report preparation, handling civilians on the battlefield, and survival skills. The American instructors had the students spend a week in the field practicing raids and ambushes. In his report to the ROKA generals, Young explained that special emphasis had been put on compass and map reading because "eighty-five percent of the veterans were not familiar with these subjects." The Chinese-American officer observed and evaluated all students during the live-fire infiltration course and the week of field exercises. MAJ Young identified six NCOs by name as "not suitable for raiding operations due to poor physical condition."<sup>12</sup> This frank assessment was appreciated by the U.S. and Korean generals and raised his esteem among them. It also helped to accelerate approval of a request to convert the ROK Army soldiers in the ISF to KATUSA status.<sup>13</sup> The report containing individual evaluations also attracted the interest of EUSA and FEC staff officers. It led to a by-name request for a very sensitive covert mission.

Well-known among the WWII Japanese-trained ROK commanders who spoke Chinese, the multi-lingual American



MAJ Jack T. Young, 2<sup>nd</sup> ID Ivanhoe Security Force commander, demonstrates silent kill, close combat techniques to ROKA students. 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Company SGT Robert W. Morgan (tee shirt) is behind Young.



1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Company SSI



SGT Robert W. Morgan, 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Company, poses with ten ROKA students during the X Corps Guerrilla Operations & Sabotage course.



5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division  
Republic of Korea  
Army SSI



7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division  
Republic of Korea  
Army SSI



8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division  
Republic of Korea  
Army SSI





General Douglas MacArthur, commander in chief, United Nations Command and Dr. Syngman Rhee, South Korea's first President, greet one another at Kimpo Air Force Base. (NARA photo)

## KATUSA (Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army)

The KATUSA Program resulted from a July 1950 agreement between South Korean President Syngman Rhee and General (GEN) Douglas MacArthur. It went into effect on 15 August 1950 when GEN MacArthur ordered Lieutenant General (LTG) Walton H. Walker, Eighth U.S. Army commander, to increase the strength of all American infantry rifle companies and artillery batteries with one hundred Koreans. Woefully understrength post-WWII American infantry divisions [two infantry battalions (instead of three) in two regiments (instead of standard three)], ordered to Korea, were 'gutted' to fill units with earlier overseas shipment dates. Legally part of the ROK Army, the KATUSA recruits were paid and administered by the South Korean government. They wore American uniforms and were issued U.S. Army equipment, rations, and special sundry items. While American divisions that arrived earlier got KATUSAs in the Pusan Perimeter, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (ID) received 8,600 untrained KATUSAs in Japan, three weeks before the Inch'on assault. The 3<sup>rd</sup> ID had the same challenges before the Wonsan landings.<sup>14</sup>

Today, KATUSA soldiers wear ROK flag patches on the right sleeve of their U.S. Army uniforms.



Republic of Korea Flag Uniform Patch

field grade officer with strong Nationalist Chinese connections had already served a CIA detail in February 1949.<sup>15</sup> Now, FEC G-2 wanted MAJ Young to interview, assess, and train CCF POWs to serve as agents for intelligence collection, sabotage operations, and direct action missions. Based on his Asian language skills, cultural background, and WWII combat experience as a former brigadier in the Chinese Nationalist Army (CNA), the ISF commander was to assess 'alleged' Nationalist soldiers who had been pressed into Red Army service after General Chiang Kai-shek and his forces left the mainland. Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) Bill S. Ito, Intelligence Section, FEC Liaison Detachment, Korea [FEC/LD (K)] wrote an SOP on how to deal with the CCF POWs recruited for Operation TURNCOAT. He also provided MAJ Young with a two-week curricula which could be adapted after training began on 10 August 1951.<sup>16</sup>

Operation TURNCOAT actually began at the temporary CCF POW compounds around Pusan. ROKA intelligence agents interrogated the captured Chinese soldiers to identify former Nationalist Army conscripts and professional soldiers. Many of these prisoners had capitulated with a UN safe conduct pass in hand. Regularly dropped over enemy lines by Psywar aircraft, safe conduct passes (signed by the FEC commander) had simple sketch maps on the back that revealed safe avenues to UN lines.<sup>17</sup> Captured in 1949 as the Red Army forced the withdrawing Nationalist units to abandon tanks, artillery, and heavy rolling stock in order to escape from the mainland, abandoned junior officers and enlisted soldiers left behind had few choices: 'out of country' service in the CCF, prison with Communist re-education, or death. Many cooperative POWs in Pusan camps that exclusively housed 'self surrendered' were already tape-recording Psywar radio broadcasts to encourage defections by former comrades.<sup>18</sup>

Lacking intelligence linguists that spoke Korean and Chinese, U.S. military and civilian organizations relied heavily on ROKA multi-lingual interrogators to conduct interviews in the CCF and North Korean POW camps. "In the 1950s, Russian was 'the priority language,' not the Asian tongues, at the Army [before Defense] Language School at Monterey [CA]. So, my ROK Army counterpart and I spoke Russian," said First Lieutenant (1LT) Jesse M. Baltazar, Far East Air Force, Office of Special Investigations (OSI).<sup>19</sup> Background checks and 'vetting' of Korean and Chinese workers—from secretaries to gate guards to cooks and cleaning staff—was done by 'trusted' South Koreans. The polygraph was still in its infancy. Fifteen Chinese POW volunteers with 'supposed' Nationalist Army service were identified by ROKA interrogators and processed for 'reassignment'.<sup>20</sup>

MAJ Jack Young, supported by five Chinese-Korean instructors, was to assess honesty, integrity, and language levels, teach rudimentary intelligence collection and reporting skills, validate cover stories, ensure that all got basic parachute ground training,



# Samples of MAJ Young's Agent Dossiers

✓ **CHOU, FENG CHI** ( ) Age 29

*No major Take employed on Southern troops*

Formal education: 6 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Electrician  
 CNA service: March 1946 to May 1949  
 CCF service: June 1949 to April 1951; Am Squad, 4th Company, 2d Battalion, 232 R 9th Army Group, 3d Field Army  
 POW position: Commander of 3d Battalion  
 Remarks: Distant family member was Hopei ranking officer in the CNA

**LI, MING** ( ) Age 25

*Launched Difficultly Kuangsi*

Formal education: 2 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Farmer  
 CNA service: December 1947 to January 1950 Kwanghsi Province guerrilla unit  
 CCF service: January 1950 to January 1951; Heavy Weapons Company, 3d Battalion, 336th 138th Army  
 POW position: Leader of 16th Platoon, 3d B  
 Remarks: Allegedly twice deserted CCF. Thr tactics.

✓ **LIU, FBI** ( ) Age 27 INS # 63

*Defect in speech*

Formal education: 2 years plus 5 months non-commissi  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Farmer and student *Hupei*  
 CNA service: {1941 to December 1949} *HS*  
 CCF service: December 1949 to March 1951, Guard of Regiment, 150th Division, 50th Army  
 POW position: Assistant Commander of 6th Battalion  
 Remarks: Member of the Chinese Nationalist Party for

**HANG, TAI HUI** ( ) Age 31 INS # 63HT03448 Pvt

Formal education: 6 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Clerk in Civil service employe  
 CNA service: 1941 to 1950  
 CCF service: July 1950 to March 1951; Ammunition Bearer in 130th Chemical Worker Company, 150th Regiment, 120th Division, 10th Army  
 POW position: Leader of 15th Platoon, 3d Company, 6th Battalion  
 Remarks: None

✓ **CHOU, FENG CHI** ( ) Age 27 INS # 63HT03080 Pvt

Formal education: 6 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Musician  
 CNA service: March 1946 to May 1949  
 CCF service: June 1949 to April 1951; Ammunition Bearer in 60th Heavy Squad, 4th Company, 2d Battalion, 232 Regiment, 10th Division, 10th Army  
 POW position: Commander of 3d Battalion  
 Remarks: Distant family member was Hopei Provincial Governor and a high ranking officer in the CNA

✓ **CHANG, CHEN HUA** ( ) Age 26 INS # 63HT03096 Pvt

Formal education: 3 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Student and farmer  
 CNA service: 1946 to 1949  
 CCF service: November 1950 to April 1951; Gunner, 1st Platoon, 6th Company, 3d Battalion, 120th Regiment, 10th Division, 10th Army, 7th Army Group, 3d Field Army  
 POW position: Squad leader of 3d Battalion  
 Remarks: Relative commanding company units of guerrillas in Hopei Province.

✓ **CHEN, HONG YIN** ( ) Age 26 INS # 63HT03041 Pvt

Formal education: 5 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Farmer  
 CNA service: July 1947 to July 1949  
 CCF service: August 1949 to January 1951; Infantryman in 1st Platoon, 7th Company, 3d Battalion, 120th Regiment, 10th Division, 10th Army  
 POW position: Commander of 1st Company, 1st Battalion  
 Remarks: Brother a former town mayor in Kiang Province. Father allegedly murdered by CCF because he was wealthy land owner.

**CHAO, HONG CHENG** ( ) Age 23 INS # 63 HK 710509 Pvt

Formal education: High School Graduate  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Student  
 CNA service: October 1947 to December 1949 in the 2nd Class of the National Military Academy  
 CCF service: December 1949 to May 1951; Recruits Instructor in Recruits Weapons Company, Artillery Battalion, 160th Regiment, 120th Division, 10th Army  
 POW position: Guard in 6th Battalion  
 Remarks: None

✓ **CHANG, YEN HSIANG** ( ) Age 20 INS # 63 HK 701345 Pvt

Formal education: 7 years  
 Captured by KKK Unit while asleep from exhaustion  
 Civil occupation: Student  
 CNA service: February 1947 to December 1949  
 CCF service: December 1950 to April 1951; Ammunition Bearer in 1st Platoon Heavy Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 17th Regiment, 17th Division, 10th Army  
 POW position: Platoon Leader  
 Remarks: Ex-CNA Harvest Officer. Family members allegedly murdered by CCF in Wu Ching-shan, Szechwan Province.

✓ **LI, HING** ( ) Age 25 INS # 63 HK 701191 Pvt

Formal education: 2 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Farmer  
 CNA service: December 1947 to January 1950 as Assistant Squad Leader in Kwanghsi Province guerrilla unit  
 CCF service: January 1950 to January 1951; Ammunition Bearer, 3d Platoon, Heavy Weapons Company, 3d Battalion, 120th Regiment, 12th Division, 10th Army  
 POW position: Leader of 16th Platoon, 3d Battalion  
 Remarks: Allegedly twice deserted CCF. Three months training in guerrilla tactics.

**LI, HUI SHAN** ( ) Age 25 INS # 63 HK 701113 Pvt

Formal education: 4 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Student  
 CNA service: 1938 to 1950  
 CCF service: May 1950 to March 1951; Ammunition Bearer in 7th Light Machine Gun Squad, 3d Platoon, 5th Company, 3d Battalion, 153d Regiment, 112th Division, 10th Army  
 POW position: Commander of 6th Battalion  
 Remarks: Wife, child and six other family members were allegedly murdered in April 1948 in Suining, Szechwan Province by the CCF after it was learned that it was an officer in the CNA and leader of an "opposition group"

✓ **LIU, FEN** ( ) Age 27 INS # 63 HK 701813 Pvt

Formal education: 2 years plus 5 months non-commissioned officers training  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Farmer and student *Hupei*  
 CNA service: 1941 to December 1949  
 CCF service: December 1949 to March 1951, Guard of Guard Company, 450th Regiment, 150th Division, 50th Army  
 POW position: Assistant Commander of 6th Battalion  
 Remarks: Member of the Chinese Nationalist Party for five years since 1945

✓ **YANG, LIN** ( ) Age 20 INS # 63 HK 700082 Pvt

Formal education: 2 years  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Worker in textile industry  
 CNA service: 1946 to 1949  
 CCF service: 1949 to 1951; Ammunition Bearer, 1st Platoon, 9th Company, 3d Battalion, 150th Regiment, 17th Division, 60th Army  
 POW position: Leader of 1st Squad of Communist Guard  
 Remarks: Relatives allegedly killed by CCF.

✓ **WU, CHEN HONG** ( ) Age 21 INS # 63 HK 701295 Pvt

Formal education: 11 years plus 3 months in the National Military Academy  
 Self surrendered  
 Civil occupation: Student  
 CNA service: March 1947 to April 1950 M1 Gunner  
 CCF service: September 1950 to February 1951; Ammunition Bearer in Ammunition Platoon, 7th Artillery Company, 155th Regiment, 112th Division, 10th Army  
 POW position: Commander of Company  
 Remarks: Wife father, his father (HS) is a 6th Regular Army Officer graduate of the 1st class of the National Academy, former mayor of an area of Kiang Province and special member of the Chinese Nationalist Party.

A list of the CCF POWs contained background information which the multi lingual major corrected or expanded in pencil (language capabilities, military education, physical condition).



and render objective evaluations of each intelligence agent's 'potential.' And, he was to screen the Chinese-speaking Korean instructors from FEC/LD (K), KLO (Korean Liaison Office), HID (Human Intelligence Detachment) Teams GOAT, and WHISKEY and choose the best trainers.<sup>21</sup> However, only Kim Yong Chan was a trained parachutist who could teach fundamentals to the candidates. Mr. Kay and Mr. Wang, who were familiar with Chinese customs, culture, and psychology, were to assist the Chinese-American major with administration and logistics. On 9 August 1951 after FEC/LD (K) CPT Shoaff gave MAJ Young seven pages of administrative instructions, some individual equipment and training aid lists, a few comments on topics of instruction, and vague, general guidance, the WWII veteran was introduced to Misters Kay and Wang. It became obvious to Young that he had two weeks to train fifteen former POWs for insertion into North Korea as intelligence agents. Simply put, he was to: 'Make it happen with what he was given.'<sup>22</sup>

MAJ Young went to work. A general schedule of instruction was approved by FEC/LD (K) COL Abraham before Young could check out the 'school' at Taegu. After submitting a list of training aids needed and additional supplies for the students, he was told to fly to Pusan, sign for fifteen POW agent candidates, and return with them on the aircraft. The release, transfer, and movement to Taegu would be done under guard and during darkness. "Strict security was to be maintained to ensure the purpose and training of personnel was not compromised."<sup>23</sup> That was pretty ludicrous because the training site was inside the 8240<sup>th</sup> AU compound, visible from the transient quarters, guarded by 'non-vetted' South Koreans, and Chinese rice was delivered to a locally hired 'Chinese cook.'<sup>24</sup> All of these things were beyond Young's control.

On loan to FEC/LD (K) for less than three weeks, the WWII combat veteran applied common sense based on the exigencies of the situation. MAJ Young complied with guidance, and followed instructions logically. He selectively ignored wishful intelligence expectations from the EUSA G-2 far removed in Seoul. The 'shake and bake' agent training course was another desperate field attempt to collect fresh intelligence. It would be mostly tactical, but maybe, by accident, a little with strategic significance. First, the agents had to avoid getting caught. Then, they had to get back without being killed by either side.<sup>25</sup>

MAJ Young flew to Pusan, picked up an MP (military police) security detail, and signed for fifteen CCF POWs dressed in 'sterile' U.S. fatigues (no markings). The prisoners ranged in age from a twenty-year-old, Yung Hsiang Chang, who was reputedly a former CNA warrant officer, to a thirty-four-year-old Catholic, Shih Tung Wu. Once secure inside the 'school' area of the 8240<sup>th</sup> AU compound in Taegu, the candidates were issued toiletries, bedding, canvas/rubber shoes, socks, notebooks and pencils, and seven packs of cigarettes (1/2 pack/day ration). After showing them the facilities the lights were turned off.<sup>26</sup>

Following a short welcome in the morning all students were required to "write a detailed personal history to establish their level of intelligence and education."<sup>27</sup>

Then, Mr. Wang, Mr. Kay, and the five instructors used the histories to prepare short dossiers on each student. The Fu Tan University graduate, MAJ Young, compiled these to evaluate capability and competency of his Chinese-Korean instructors and advisors, to begin official dossiers on all, and assign specific classes to each of his staff. Because backgrounds could not be corroborated by personnel files or pay cards, the ISF commander relied on 'gut instinct' and information gleaned by the instructors who lived and ate with the candidates.<sup>28</sup>

All CCF POW students had North Korean People's Army (NKPA) ID numbers and held internal leadership positions in the prison camp. These formal assignments ranged from a POW compound commander to battalion, company and platoon commanders to a squad leader. Most interestingly, twenty-one year old Chien Sheng Wu was the Pusan compound commander. That fact prompted no written comments by Young. Admitted education ranged from twelve to two years (two farmers and a textile worker). Unproven CNA service spanned the gamut from twelve years to fourteen months and alleged duty positions from guerrilla squad leader to KMT military academy cadet to a warrant officer and an officer. Having been conscripted for the CCF, seven were relegated to service as ammunition bearers, infantrymen (3), guards (2), gunner/instructors (2), and a truck driver. Fourteen were officially classified as 'self-surrendered' and one had been captured asleep by ROK forces. Two claimed that they were Christians.<sup>29</sup> Based on this personal data MAJ Young evaluated each candidate after he was photographed and fingerprinted.

For three days the educated, combat-experienced Chinese-American major interrogated the fifteen candidates. Young added Chinese symbols for names, noted dialects and Mandarin speakers (court level Chinese), localities for tactical employment, identified Chinese-Koreans, recorded weak physical condition, marked the police academy graduates, and highlighted those who spoke poor Chinese.



**The 1<sup>st</sup> Loudspeaker & Leaflet Company and the 1<sup>st</sup> Radio Broadcasting & Leaflet Group enlisted POWs to tape record surrender pleas to their comrades.**



While a student was being interviewed by MAJ Young, the rest were playing simple memory games using *Life* and *Look* pictorial magazines and 'The Whispering Game' to pass verbal messages one to another while seated in a circle. FEC/LD (K) felt that memory training was "useful, simple and not boring."<sup>30</sup> These preliminary exercises did not disclose any intelligence training scheduled to follow. This precaution was taken in case any were disqualified in screening. None were, and agent training commenced on the fourth day.<sup>31</sup>

Four and a half seven-hour-days [a two-hour lunch break/siesta common for Chinese workers had been set by FEC/LD (K)] were devoted to intelligence training: enemy order of battle; observation and description; distance, height and length estimation. Examinations and critiques followed each class. "Special EEI (Essential Elements of Information) for 'Operation TURNCOAT'" furnished by EUSA G-2 was three pages (both sides) long and had a map that revealed nine critical areas which might contain CCF activities. Questions addressed infantry, armor, artillery, supplies, propaganda and morale.<sup>32</sup>

Since the EEI was excruciatingly detailed, analyses would have been difficult for a seasoned senior field

commander. A poorly educated private could not calculate the relevance of various questions. Prepared by American staffs (EUSA and FEC) for U.S. personnel with comparable education and military experience, the EEI far exceeded learning capacities of agent candidates. There was also an assumption that agents posing as CCF privates would have great access behind enemy lines; few low-ranking soldiers enjoy this in any army. Because compasses, maps, binoculars, and radios would not be furnished, no training was provided.<sup>33</sup> It was MAJ Young who 'dumbed down' the instruction and training to accommodate his students. They would be impersonating privates, not NCOs or officers.

Plausible cover stories of being temporarily captured and escaping, inadvertently left behind by relocating units, and surviving overrun units and ambushed patrols were fabricated with the instructors on the tenth and eleventh days of training. Stories were tied to CCF units known to have operated around the assigned parachute drop zones. Two mornings were spent preparing covers and undergoing practice interrogations. Parachute ground training covered three afternoons. There were no practice jumps. Mr. Wang assembled CCF uniforms appropriate to



This Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) Psywar safe conduct pass had a sketch map on the reverse side showing safe access routes to UN lines.





Three CCF POW "TURNCOAT" agents pose with weapons and uniforms appropriate for the season. While provided forged pay cards, they were only given hand grenades for self-protection during missions. Weapons were not provided.

the summer season, insignia, and forged pay cards while the agents trained. Instead of being issued pistols or rifles, the agents were armed with CCF hand grenades.<sup>34</sup>

The twelfth and thirteenth days were spent preparing for individual missions. Since no maps would be issued for their missions, each agent had to select an infiltration route, develop an emergency pick up plan, and choose an exfiltration route. The details had to be memorized and were briefed back to instructors several times along with the cover stories. A full dress rehearsal preceded a critique and final briefing. After dark on the thirteenth day, MAJ Young transferred custody of the agents to a FEC/LD (K) officer and the CCF-uniformed group disappeared into the night. The Chinese-American major received a letter of commendation through channels from infantry COL W. I. Russell, the Military Intelligence Section 'commander' of FEC/LD (K).<sup>35</sup> Shortly afterwards, MAJ Young was flown to Formosa to discuss the repatriation of former CNA soldiers, who had been conscripted by the CCF and captured in Korea.<sup>36</sup>

Was Operation TURNCOAT viable? The G-2 Sections of Far East Command in Japan and Eighth Army in Korea, desperate for tactical intelligence, supported innovative, foolhardy collection programs throughout the war. Results were spotty at best. The temporary assignment of multi-lingual MAJ Jack Young to Operation TURNCOAT demonstrated how woefully short Americans with Chinese and Korean cultural backgrounds, language (written and

conversation), and the requisite security clearances were in U.S. intelligence, military and civilian, elements. Without CNA records to verify the claims of CCF POWs, MAJ Young relied on his dated WWII combat experience, KMT academy connections, linguistic skills, and the input from the FEC L/D (K) instructors to reinforce 'gut' feelings about agent candidates. For the ROKA interrogators, a CCF POW who claimed CNA service and who volunteered to be an intelligence agent, overrode limited education and military experience. American expectations that coerced, conscripted CCF soldiers (private to junior officer) were capable of performing as tactical intelligence agents with only ten days training in collection basics was wishful thinking. Internal security measures in North Korea were simply disregarded.<sup>37</sup>

The lack of radios, compasses, maps, and binoculars limited timely reporting, prevented the provision of accurate map coordinates for EEI, and navigation 'behind the lines' reverted to terrain memorization. The lack of equipment that kept the agents 'sterile' and improved cover, did little to facilitate return through UN lines. While operations and training conducted by FEC L/D (K) and 8240<sup>th</sup> AU were compartmented on a 'need to know' basis, the use of 'non-vetted' Korean gate guards and employment of 'local' ethnic cooks, and special deliveries of Chinese rice to an American compound negated most covertness. Compound this with the fact that the foreign trainees were visible from the 8240<sup>th</sup> AU transient quarters, removed any operational security.<sup>38</sup>



During the four-year war AVIARY Section of 8240<sup>th</sup> AU and the CIA dropped hundreds of agents behind the lines. Few survived and those who returned did so by walking back. They brought outdated intelligence and most had been 'doubled' by the Communists.<sup>39</sup> One postwar assessment described the practice of sending POWs behind the lines to collect intelligence and organize resistance as "futile and callous."<sup>40</sup>

Operation TURNCOAT was a desperate, ill-fated intelligence collection scheme that was implemented with pressure from higher headquarters demanding actionable tactical information. It was doomed from the start by a lack of records to 'vett' CNA backgrounds. Assignment of a culturally astute, linguistically gifted, and innovative Chinese-American combat veteran served to improve and calibrate training, but even he could not create 'James Bond' secret agents in ten days from poorly educated peasants. The experience revealed the plight of conscripted former CNA soldiers in the CCF who had been captured in Korea. MAJ Young's coordination efforts for Operation TURNCOAT raised an Armistice POW repatriation caveat that could potentially benefit President Syngman Rhee and General Chiang Kai-shek on Formosa. ♣

*I would like to give special thanks to the daughter of COL Jack T. Young, Chialing 'Jolly' Young King, for granting access to her father's files and talking about him. Jackie L. Wan, her sister, edited the article. Family involvement gave it personality.*

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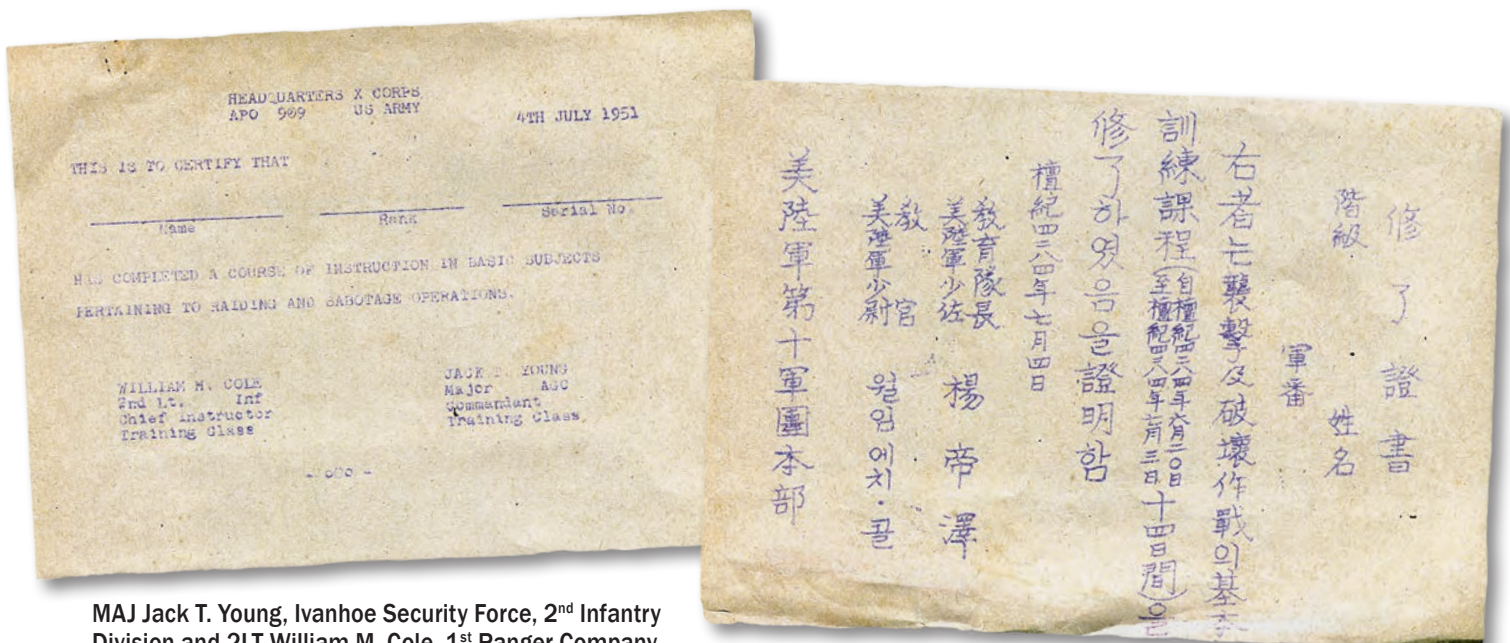
## Endnotes

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- 3 Department of Army DA Form 66 for USAR COL Jack Theodore Young, AGC, dated 22 August 1966; Department of Defense DD Form 214, Armed Forces of the United States, Report of Transfer or Discharge for USAR COL Jack Theodore Young, AGC, dated 31 May 1968 (COL Jack T. Young Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC); June B. Young, interview by Briscoe, 4 April 2006, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
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- 11 HQ, Ivanhoe Security Force, 2nd U.S. Infantry Division, APO 248 letter dated 4 July 1951 SUBJECT: Training, COL Jack T. Young Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 12 ISF letter dated 4 July 1951, SUBJECT: Training; HQ X Corps, APO 909, CG OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE Message, SUBJECT: Extension of Guerrilla Training dated 19 June 1951, Young Collection. *SGT Robert W. Morgan, a BAR gunner in 1st Ranger Company, survived and escaped a CCF envelopment in a heavy engagement 18-20 May 1951, then evaded capture, and returned to American lines several days later.* Robert W. Black, *Rangers in Korea* (NY: Ivy Books, 1989), 159-162.
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- 17 Briscoe, "Loudspeaker Psywar in Korea," *Veritas*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 50-51; Briscoe, "1st L&L in Korea: A Photographer's Record, 1952-53," *Veritas*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 22. *Some CCF and NPKA 'soldiers' who surrendered were political commissar officers charged with organizing the Communist POW camps. On 10 June 1952 paratroopers of the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team (ARCT) put down riots within the Kojedo POW camps where a U.S. Army brigadier general, attempting to negotiate, had been seized and held captive by the Communists.*
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- 19 *Lacking intelligence linguists that spoke Korean and Chinese, American military services relied heavily on ROK Army (ROKA) multi-lingual interrogators to conduct interviews in CCF and North Korean POW camps. 'Vetting' of local Korean help—from secretaries to guard forces to cooks and cleaning staff—was done by 'trusted' South Koreans. The polygraph was in its infancy.* Retired MAJ Jesse M. Baltazar, interview by Briscoe, 30 October 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 20 FECOM, FEC/LD (K) list of CCF POWs, undated, Young Collection; *When the North Koreans invaded South Korea on 25 June 1950, there were only two Korean linguists at the disposal of the Far East Command (FEC) G-2. The Technical Intelligence Section with its large bevy of regional linguists had been disbanded by FEC in 1949. The Army Language School at Monterey, California, would take nearly a year before it could train 100 Korean linguists. This meant that almost all counterintelligence and human intelligence operations plans had to be explained through interpreters of varying abilities. Few records were available to verify information data provided by Koreans being employed by U.S. Forces.* Ann Bray, John P. Finnegan, and James L. Gilbert, *In the Shadow of the Sphinx: A History of Army Counterintelligence* [Fort Belvoir, VA: Office of Strategic Management and Information, U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM), 2003], 112-113; Finnegan, *The U.S. Army in the Korean War 1950-1953* (Fort Belvoir, VA: Office of the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army INSCOM, May 2001), 60.
- 21 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POW's; FEC/LD Korea memo dated 19 August 1951, SUBJECT: Operation Turncoat, Young Collection; Mr. Richard K. Hong, KLO Team GOAT and TLO 24th ID, March 1951-February 1954, interview by Dr. Richard



- L. Kiper, 31 October 2003, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **KLO Team GOAT consisted of thirty agents. Its mission was to collect information about NKPA supply routes, unit identifications, morale, and military training.** Hong interview, 31 October 2003.
- 22 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; FEC/LD Korea memo dated 19 August 1951, SUBJECT: Operation Turncoat, Young Collection.
- 23 FEC/LD Korea memo dated 19 August 1951, SUBJECT: Operation Turncoat, Young Collection.
- 24 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; FEC/LD Korea classified memo dated 19 August 1951, SUBJECT: Operation Turncoat, Young Collection. **Chinese being trained inside the 8240<sup>th</sup> AU compound was obvious to 1LT Joseph R. Ulatoski, commander of Leopard Base (Forward). Called back to the headquarters from So-do (island) on the East coast for several days, he watched the Chinese who came outside in a group during their daily two-hour 'lunch & siesta' break. Exactly what they were doing he did not know, but the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Company veteran recognized Chinese when he saw them.** Retired BG Joseph R. Ulatoski, interview by Briscoe, 20 May 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 25 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; FEC/LD Korea memo dated 19 August 1951, SUBJECT: Operation Turncoat dated 19 August 1951; FEC/LD Military Intelligence Section letter dated 1 September 1951, SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation; FEC/LD CWO Bill S. Ito letter to MAJ Young, dated 9 August 1951; CCF Agent Backgrounds, Young Collection.
- 26 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; FEC/LD Korea memo dated 19 August 1951, SUBJECT: Operation Turncoat dated 19 August 1951; FEC/LD Military Intelligence Section letter dated 1 September 1951, SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation; FEC/LD CWO Bill S. Ito letter to MAJ Young, dated 9 August 1951; CCF Agent Backgrounds, Young Collection.
- 27 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; CCF Agent Backgrounds, Young Collection.
- 28 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; CCF Agent Backgrounds, Young Collection.
- 29 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; CCF Agent Backgrounds, Young Collection.
- 30 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; CCF Agent Backgrounds; FEC/LD Korea memo dated 19 August 1951, SUBJECT: Operation Turncoat dated 19 August 1951, Young Collection.
- 31 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; CCF Agent Backgrounds; FEC/LD Korea memo dated 19 August 1951, SUBJECT: Operation Turncoat, Young Collection.
- 32 Eighth U.S. Army, Office of Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 Intelligence, APO 301, memorandum dated 9 August 1951, SUBJECT: Special EEI for "Operation Turncoat," Young Collection.
- 33 Eighth U.S. Army, Office of Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 Intelligence, APO 301, memorandum dated 9 August 1951, SUBJECT: Special EEI for "Operation Turncoat," Young Collection.
- 34 FECOM, FEC L/D (K) memo dated 5 August 1951, SUBJECT: Training of Chinese POWs; EUSA, ACS, G-2 Intelligence memo dated 9 August 1951, SUBJECT: Special EEI for "Operation Turncoat," Young Collection. **Even limiting agent armament to hand grenades was hazardous as the Avairy Section, 8240<sup>th</sup> AU discovered in 1952. Just before the last of six agents jumped from a 437<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Wing C-46D Commando over North Korea on 19 February 1952, a 'double' agent lobbed a grenade back inside the cargo compartment. Three Americans were killed and one was declared missing in action (MIA), presumed dead. The grenade broke aileron and rudder cables making the C-46 uncontrollable. The remaining five airmen and one 8240<sup>th</sup> AU soldier bailed out and were captured. They were released during Operation BIG SWITCH.** Retired USN CPT Harry E. Ettinger, interviews by Dr. Jared M. Tracy, 26 November and 10 December 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; KORWALD Loss Incident Summary at [http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/korea/reports/air/korwald\\_info\\_1583.htm](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/korea/reports/air/korwald_info_1583.htm) accessed 12/10/2012.
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- 36 HQ, Military Assistance Advisory Group, Formosa, APO 63, letter dated 14 September 1951, SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation for Major Jack Young, O-889127 signed by BG John P. Willey, Chief, Army Section, Young Collection. **BG John P. Willey, the MARS Task Force commander, CBI Theater, knew MAJ Young from the Chinese Nationalist Army training mission after his element seized the Burma Road. BG Willey and the Chinese-American major also served together on the Marshall Mission to China. They were well acquainted. As a KMT military academy graduate, brigadier, and old family friend of General Chiang Kai-shek, MAJ Young was very well connected. He spirited national treasures from mainland China to Taiwan in February 1949 while Mao Ze-dong and the Red Army were consolidating power.** CSGPA-O-AG 201 Young, Jack T. message dated 15 February 1949, SUBJECT: Assignment of Officer, Young Collection.
- 37 Frederick W. Cleaver, George Fitzpatrick, John Ponturo, William Rossiter, and C. Darwin Stolzenbach, *UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954* (U), Technical Memorandum ORO-T-64 (AFFE)(Chevy Chase, MD: Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University, June 1956), 3.
- 38 Ulatoski interview, 7 March 2011.
- 39 Retired COL John K. Sadler, interviews by Briscoe, 18 November 2011 and 18 April 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; retired MG John K. Singlaub, interview by Briscoe, 21 March 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 40 Cleaver, et al, *UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954*, 94.



MAJ Jack T. Young, Ivanhoe Security Force, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division and 2LT William M. Cole, 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Company, signed the X Corps Guerrilla Operations and Sabotage training certificates (English and Korean languages).



# CCRAK

## The Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea

by Michael E. Krivdo and  
Troy J. Sacquety







**“Looking back, we could have developed a much more capable force much earlier, if we had just made up our mind as to what we wanted to achieve with [the guerrillas].”<sup>1</sup>**

— BG Glenn Muggelberg, CCRAK Operations Officer, 1953

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Glenn E. Muggelberg served as the CCRAK Operations Officer and later as the commander of the United Nations Partisan Forces Korea (UNPFK). He retired as a brigadier general, Army National Guard.

**O**peration GREEN DRAGON, the “largest [guerrilla] airborne operation” of the war, began on the cold night of 25 January 1953.<sup>2</sup> Ninety-seven North Korean guerrillas and fifteen hundred pounds of infantry weapons and ammunition were airdropped into the snowy mountains east of P’yongyang. Their mission: to establish a long-term guerrilla base in the interior to harass the North Korean military. More than a month passed without radio contact. Suddenly, the team began issuing sporadic reports. GREEN DRAGON was down to thirty-one men and needed reinforcement. Suspicious, the Far East Command’s (FEC) Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK) was reluctant to reinforce a unit that was most likely compromised.<sup>3</sup>

Two months later (April 1953) GREEN DRAGON ‘upped the ante’ by reporting that it had recovered “five downed U.S. airmen” and were awaiting pickup arrangements.<sup>4</sup> After contacting the team to hear the report firsthand, CCRAK decided to recover the airmen and reinforce GREEN DRAGON. On the night of 18 May 1953 fifty-seven more guerrillas were dropped with equipment and instructions for extracting the Americans. They employed a ‘snatch’ rig that enabled a fixed-wing aircraft to pick the airmen up individually. But when the aircraft lined up for its first recovery, it “got the hell shot out of it.” They aborted the mission.<sup>5</sup> Although GREEN DRAGON broadcasted intermittently for months, CCRAK labeled them as compromised. None of the guerrillas or Americans ever returned.<sup>6</sup>

GREEN DRAGON was typical of a CCRAK-directed operation during the Korean War. Besides delivering 150 trained guerrillas and a ton of military equipment to the enemy, it accomplished nothing. Fortunately for the Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) guerrilla command, CCRAK directed few operations on its own

and had little impact on their day-to-day activities. Because various published accounts present conflicting information on CCRAK, one needs to understand the unit’s organization, limitations, capabilities, and issues. This study traces the origins of CCRAK, keeping it in context. The rationale for the creation of CCRAK and an assessment of mission performance are presented.

The idea of a theater-level headquarters element to oversee and direct the operations of the many organizations employing North Korean guerrillas was discussed at the FEC level beginning in January 1951.<sup>7</sup> The EUSA, the Fifth Air Force, the British Royal Marines, the U.S. Marine Corps, the Republic of Korea (ROK) Army and Marine Corps, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) employed North Koreans and Chinese as intelligence agents and guerrilla raiders behind enemy lines. Failure to coordinate these activities at theater-level led to frequent instances of fratricide.<sup>8</sup> Meetings were held to coordinate and deconflict guerrilla operations, but these were tactical ‘band aids.’<sup>9</sup> To establish lasting control over all guerrilla actions throughout the peninsula, a theater-level approach was required. But first, changes were needed in FEC leadership and organization.

The roots of General (GEN) Douglas A. MacArthur’s FEC organization date to his General Headquarters (GHQ), Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA) in WWII. In 1945, MacArthur built FEC around his SWPA structure and the ‘Bataan Gang.’ Although this approach assured a smooth transition and enhanced continuity, it also perpetuated bad habits, flawed practices, and inefficiencies. For example, in the Philippines GEN MacArthur delegated all responsibility for guerrilla operations to his Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence (G-2), MG Charles A. Willoughby. That situation continued in the



Far East Command SSI



Eighth United States Army SSI



# Far East Command Organization



FEC despite conflicting with assigned staff functions and existing Army doctrine.<sup>10</sup>

Normal staff functioning places 'operations' under the staff direction of the G-3. FEC ignored that principle when it placed an operational combat unit under the staff cognizance of the G-2. That was not the only piece of doctrine that FEC disregarded. According to the U.S. Army's contemporary doctrinal publication on guerrilla operations, FM 31-21, a theater command should "organize a theater special forces command on the same level as the theater army, navy, and air" commands. The doctrine also specified that "All units engaged in special forces operations and responsible to the theater commander are assigned to" that command so that unity of effort can be effectively achieved.<sup>11</sup> In going against existing doctrine, FEC basically pointed CCRAK down the path to failure.

Furthermore, FEC under MacArthur (like his WWII SWPA), was not a unified, joint, or combined command structure as we have today. FEC had U.S. Navy and Air Force service component commands, but not a separate Army service component command until later under

GEN Ridgway. MacArthur served both as commander of the FEC and as the Army component commander, generally considering them one and the same. Thus FEC, like SWPA, placed "the air and naval component commands under the ground component command."<sup>12</sup> Army personnel dominated FEC from top to bottom.<sup>13</sup>

GEN MacArthur's *modus operandi* continued after his relief in April 1951. The MacArthur team was still in place when GEN Matthew B. Ridgway assumed command. Ridgway established the priority of "fix[ing] responsibility for all behind-the-lines activity in a single headquarters."<sup>14</sup> But Ridgway's Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, MG Willoughby, entertained only G-2-centered courses of action.

As often happens, the most obvious and simplest course of action prevailed. FEC already had an element working with the guerrillas, the Far East Command/Liaison Group (FEC/LG). This fifty-man staff group in the FEC G-2 was created on 20 December 1950 at the height of the Chinese Communist intervention. It provided vital tactical intelligence and order of battle on the new



General Douglas A. MacArthur was the commander of the Far East Command until relieved on 11 April 1952. Despite his removal, MacArthur's influence continued to negatively affect Army Special Operations for the remainder of the Korean War.



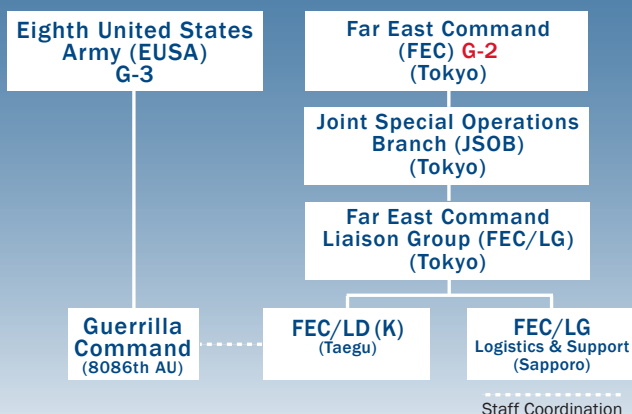
Major General Charles A. Willoughby, longtime Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence (G-2) for GEN MacArthur.



Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway, commander of the EUSA, succeeded GEN MacArthur as the commander of United Nations Forces, Korea/Far East Command. He directed the formation of CCRAK in November 1951.



# Far East Command Liaison Group (FEC/LG) Organization, July 1951



FEC/LD (K), at first independent from CCRAK, was later a subordinate unit. Its headquarters in Seoul, pictured here, was near that of CCRAK.

enemy threat. FEC/LG trained North Korean ‘agents’ and placed them behind enemy lines via parachute, sea and ground insertions. When the agents returned, FEC/LG personnel debriefed them for current information on enemy dispositions. MG Willoughby proposed that all other guerrilla units be placed under FEC/LG.<sup>15</sup>

GEN Ridgway went along with MG Willoughby’s recommendation. FEC G-2 quickly reorganized FEC/LG to serve as a theater-level special operations coordinating body. On paper (26 July 1951), the ‘old’ FEC/LG was

deactivated and a ‘new,’ expanded FEC/LG 8240<sup>th</sup> Army Unit (AU) was activated as an FEC Table of Distribution (TD) element. FEC/LG had three major parts: a FEC/LG command element located in Tokyo; a logistics and support staff in Sapporo, Japan; and a new operational liaison detachment in Korea (FEC/LD [K]), co-located with EUSA headquarters in Taegu, Korea.

The previous FEC/LG commander, COL Calvin A. L. Dickey, continued as the ‘commander’ of the new, expanded FEC/LG. The FEC G-2 detailed another staff officer, COL William I. Russell, as the officer-in-charge of the FEC/LD (K) element in Korea. The two staff officers had no experience with special or unconventional warfare (UW) operations. As a result, by default FEC/LD (K) became “engaged primarily in intelligence activities and had no immediate effect on the [EUSA] partisan effort.” But the only guerrillas subordinate to FEC/LG were those of the EUSA, not the many other elements that also worked with guerrillas.<sup>16</sup> FEC/LG and FEC/LD (K) were simply more cosmetic ‘band aids’ applied to the theater-level guerrilla control issue.

Conflicting command relationships further confused the situation. Although FEC/LG was to be the overall guerrilla coordination unit, the 8086th AU guerrilla command (LTC Samuel W. Koster) worked for the EUSA G-3 (see chart). LTC Koster continued to plan and conduct UW operations just as he had before the FEC interposition. FEC/LD (K) simply imposed two new administrative requirements on Koster’s command: to coordinate his operations with FEC/LD (K); and to provide FEC/LD (K) with info copies of reports.<sup>17</sup>

Although the FEC/LG reorganization was intended to improve command relationships, it exacerbated the problem (FEC G-2 oversight versus EUSA G-3 direction) by complicating the UW decision-making process. To compound the issue, the FEC/LG commander (COL Dickey) reported to another staff officer, COL Charles C. Blakeney, the FEC G-2 ‘Joint Special Operations Branch’ (JSOB) Chief. The JSOB was responsible for FEC clandestine intelligence collection. On 1 August 1951, the burdensome guerrilla coordination chain shortened one link when Blakeney became ‘dual-hatted’ as commander of FEC/LG in Tokyo.<sup>18</sup>

Between July and October 1951, the Armistice negotiations further complicated the guerrilla situation and the shortcomings of the FEC/LG structure became glaringly obvious. From the Communists’ perspective, it was imperative for them to reoccupy the islands held by Koster’s guerrillas before a ceasefire froze the opposing combatants in place; they had to remove the threat to their exposed flanks. From FEC’s view, the guerrilla-held islands served vital purposes in providing safe bases for collecting intelligence, launching raids, posting early warning systems, and for prepositioning assets to recover pilots and aircrew shot down over the north (see separate article, page 50). When the Chinese retook several of the northwest islands in September and October, FEC realized the need to better coordinate island defenses



and the guerrilla effort at theater level. The latter issue was resolved on 6 January 1952 when FEC tasked the U.S. Navy with overall responsibility for Korean island defense and the guerrillas became a supporting element to that effort.<sup>19</sup> But solving the guerrilla problem proved more difficult.

On 21-22 October 1951, staffs of FEC G-2, CIA, and EUSA G-2 met to discuss the creation of a theater guerrilla command. Conspicuously absent was the EUSA G-3 who ran the guerrilla warfare effort. Those talks proposed another FEC G-2 organization, CCRAK.<sup>20</sup> In December 1951, FEC formed the new unit under the FEC/LG '8240<sup>th</sup> AU' umbrella designation. FEC/LG remained intact, meaning there were now two theater-level special operations elements nominally in charge of the same guerrilla effort. To make matters worse, FEC made CCRAK "responsible for coordinating all behind-the-lines

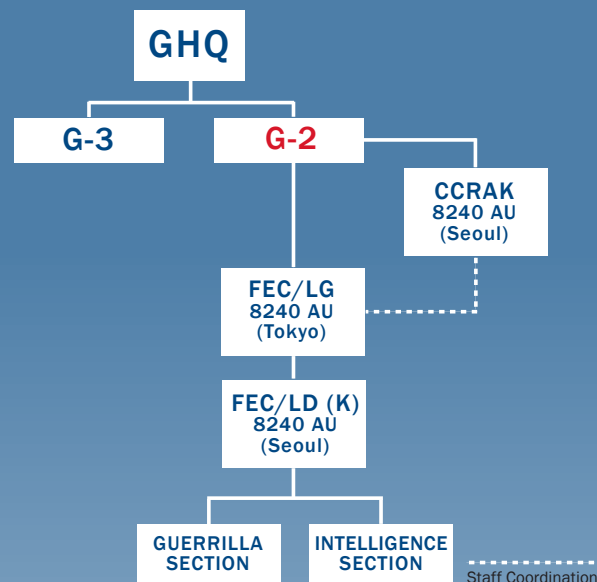
## The CIA paramilitary effort's "archrival for personnel, funding, air support, and, above all, mission authorization was a hodgepodge intelligence operation . . . called CCRAK."<sup>29</sup>

— MG John K. Singlaub, former CCRAK Deputy Director

activities of various services and agencies" within Korea, the same mission FEC/LG had!<sup>21</sup> In a masterful stroke of obfuscation, FEC/LD (K) was given operational control (OPCON) over the EUSA guerrilla command. FEC/LD (K), instead of reporting to CCRAK, did so to FEC/LG (see chart).<sup>22</sup> This official 'double talk' confused the assigned personnel of all elements. One CCRAK veteran stated that he "thought it was just a name change" rather than two separate elements.<sup>23</sup> Fortunately for the EUSA guerrilla command, neither CCRAK nor FEC/LD (K) exercised any command prerogatives other than assuming a greater role in planning and conducting deep airborne operations (like GREEN DRAGON).<sup>24</sup> The actual day-to-day UW operations and support remained with the EUSA under the staff cognizance of the G-3.<sup>25</sup>

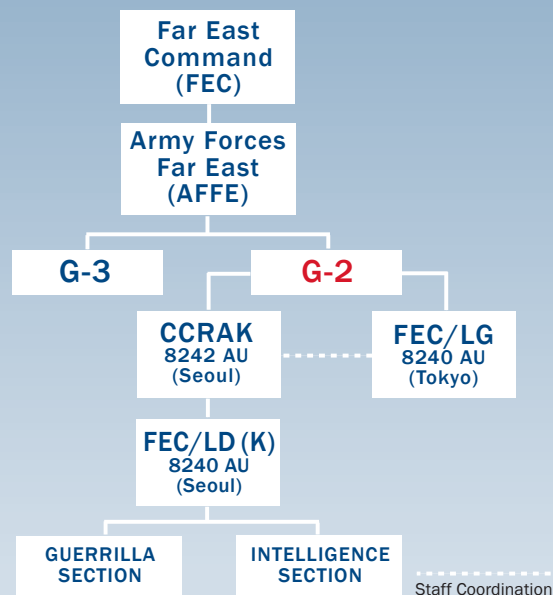
The CCRAK headquarters was somewhat unorthodox. The small staff (of about 100 G-2 personnel) had S-2 (intelligence), S-3 (operations), and a combined S-1/S-4 (administration and logistics) section.<sup>26</sup> CCRAK was initially 'commanded' by Army COL Washington M. Ives, Jr., former executive officer for MG Willoughby. Although the CIA filled the deputy director billet, the officer assigned to that post (detailed U.S. Army MAJ John K. Singlaub) really functioned more to insulate

## Guerrilla command relationships within the Far East Command, December 1951



When CCRAK was created, it had no command authority over any element of the guerrilla command. It only acted in an advisory role. (Note the oddity of having an operational unit under the staff cognizance of the G-2.)

## CCRAK Organization, September 1952



The emergence of CCRAK as the unit in charge of the EUSA guerrillas was the FEC G-2 solution to the problem of organizing for unconventional warfare. It proved ineffective. (Note that it remained under the FEC G-2, vice G-3 chain.)





Korean Guerrilla  
Airborne Infantry  
Badge

In November 1952, CCRAK directed the guerrilla units to form airborne elements. Pictured are several paratroopers from the 1st Partisan Airborne Infantry Regiment (PAIR) and their American advisor. All wear the guerrilla-issued airborne wings. Standing left to right is Kim Myong Sik, Ching Hyun Kyo, Major Phillip L. Vetrone, and Kim Su Mon. Kneeling left to right is Kim Nam Sik and Koo Dal Song.



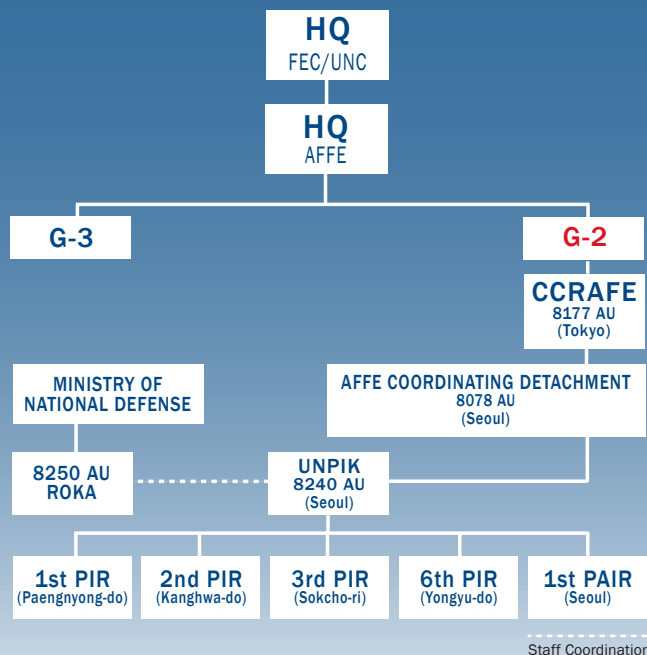
The United Nations  
Partisan Forces,  
Korea (UNPFK)



The United Nations  
Partisan Infantry,  
Korea (UNPIK)

CCRAK achieved a major coup with the signing of the Stuart-Sohn Agreement on 16 August 1953. The accord activated the 8250th Army Unit for the North Korean guerrillas. From left to right: South Korean Minister of National Defense Sohn Won-il, CCRAK G-3 LTC Glenn E. Muggelberg, and South Korean Chairman of the House of Representatives Shin Ik-hui.

## CCRAFE Organization, September 1953



After the Armistice, the Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities Far East (CCRAFE) replaced CCRAK. With no special warfare mission, CCRAFE's primary concern was intelligence collection and dissemination.

the CIA from any CCRAK interference.<sup>27</sup> And while the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force provided liaison officers, UN contingents (including the South Koreans) were not invited. In any event, the liaison officers were more like observers since their services' guerrilla activities were beyond CCRAK authority.<sup>28</sup> The only guerrillas that CCRAK could influence were those belonging to the EUSA guerrilla command. With Armistice negotiations underway the FEC staff continued their 'paper war fighting.'

On 27 September 1952, CCRAK was separated from the FEC/LG 8240<sup>th</sup> AU and became the 8242<sup>nd</sup> AU under a newly-created Army Forces Far East (AFPE), the Army service component command of FEC. FEC/LD (K) was made OPCON to CCRAK in Japan. Finally, almost two years after its creation, the EUSA guerrilla command was subsumed by CCRAK. FEC/LG in Tokyo reverted to a purely administrative role supporting CCRAK, FEC/LD (K), and the EUSA guerrillas.<sup>30</sup>

Still more cosmetics had to be applied to the guerrilla 'face.' Two months later, another paper change made the guerrilla units appear more conventional. CCRAK redesignated the guerrillas as the United Nations Partisan Forces, Korea (UNPFK) and codified its units as 'battalions' and 'regiments.' The major guerrilla elements were labeled as Partisan Infantry Regiments, each comprised of several guerrilla-led Partisan Infantry Battalions (see chart). Guerrillas with previous airborne training were merged into a separate Partisan Airborne Infantry Regiment (PAIR). It looked good on paper, but the various guerrilla unit commanders continued to



refer to themselves by the original Donkey, Wolfpack, or other names that they had used for years. The PIR/PAIR designations were only inserted in reports that went up the chain of command outside the guerrilla units.<sup>31</sup> CCRAK had little influence on the day-to-day operations of the guerrilla units, whose activities were curtailed by the approaching cease-fire.

CCRAK accomplished more after the Armistice than it ever did while the war was underway. It's most significant achievement was when it resolved the legal status of the guerrillas and paved the way for their transition into South Korean society. Comprised largely of displaced North Koreans, the guerrillas had no legal standing in South Korea. The Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) distrusted them and was content to leave the guerrillas under the care of the U.S. Army. The Armistice changed everything by negating the requirement for the guerrillas. Something had to be done to settle their status. On 16 August 1953, the CCRAK commander, BG Archibald W. Stuart, and the South Korean Minister of National Defense, Sohn Won-il, reached an accord for the disposition of the guerrillas.<sup>32</sup> The Stuart-Sohn Agreement activated a U.S.-funded 8250th AU in the ROK Army and all guerrillas transferred into it. The ROKA gradually integrated the guerrilla officers and men, assuming control, discipline, and administration. During the transition, American advisors assisted with the transition by providing direction and support.<sup>33</sup> By 8 January 1954, the ROKA had discharged or reassigned all 8250th AU personnel, and the EUSA guerrillas passed into history.<sup>34</sup>

In September 1953, CCRAK renamed UNPFK as the UN Partisan Infantry Korea (UNPIK), but the former guerrillas were technically ROKA soldiers with only a minor defensive role. CCRAK no longer had an operational function and was deactivated in the fall of 1953. Its personnel were transferred to a new theater intelligence collection unit called the Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities Far East (CCRAFE), 8177th AU, in Japan. The Army Forces Far East Coordinating Detachment (AFFECD), 8078th AU, represented CCRAFE in Korea.<sup>35</sup>

CCRAK was formed too late in the war, with inexperienced personnel, and with too little authority. In the end, CCRAK got control of the EUSA guerrilla command, but the 'paper tiger' came too late to exercise command. Fortunately, outside of its total failure with deep airborne missions, CCRAK had no impact on tactical-level UW operations. The American military advisors with the guerrilla units had great latitude and directed missions using their best judgment. CCRAK staff officers concentrated primarily on the collection and dissemination of intelligence – administrative tasks that they were well-suited to perform. CCRAK's Operations Officer perhaps best summed it up when he declared that he "got the feeling [that the guerrilla leaders] did just as they wanted to do."<sup>36</sup>

Another officer stated flatly that "CCRAK had no real control, no command function."<sup>37</sup> That opinion was

## Strengths and Weaknesses of CCRAK

### *Some of CCRAK's successes were:*

- that it excelled in staff functions.
- that its intelligence collection, sanitization, and dissemination allowed effective use of guerrilla and agent gathered information.
- that it made administrative agreements that provided for the legal status of the North Korean guerrillas.
- that its logistics efforts effectively supported the guerrilla command.
- that it demonstrated a recognition that some kind of senior command and control of guerrilla forces needed to be achieved, even if it was poorly thought out and executed.

### *CCRAK's problems were:*

- that it did not follow doctrine that called for an independent theater-level special operations command.
- that it was not given effective command and control of the Army's guerrilla units until it was too late to make a difference.
- that confusion surrounding CCRAK and its mission, combined with constant reorganizations, created a cloud of uncertainty.
- that bureaucratic infighting between the U.S. Army and the CIA, and within staff sections of FEC headquarters, reduced unit effectiveness.
- that it made no attempt to become a truly joint or combined command.

mirrored by the guerrilla task force commanders and advisors, one of whom dryly noted that CCRAK "was just another layer down south," and had no influence on how he ran his guerrillas.<sup>38</sup> Its biggest contribution was made during demobilization of the guerrillas. Current doctrine specifies that the transition phase remains "the final, most difficult, and most sensitive phase of UW operations."<sup>39</sup> The Stuart-Sohn Agreement provided legal status for these combatants and opened the door to citizenship and ROKA service. In the end, the best that can be said about CCRAK is that it successfully transitioned its guerrillas to civilian life after their war service. ♣



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## Endnotes

- 1 BG (Ret) Glenn Muggelberg, COL (Ret) Paul W. Steinbeck, and LTC (Ret) Michael A. Matzko, Interview by COL Rod Paschall and Dr. Edward J. Drea, 15 November 1985, Project 85-S, Korean Partisan Operations, United States Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC), Carlisle, PA, 14-15, Muggelberg quote from 11.
- 2 Frederick W. Cleaver, George Fitzpatrick, John Ponturo, *et al.*, "UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954," AFFE Group Technical Memorandum ORO-T-64, Johns Hopkins University, Operations Research Office, June 1956 (hereafter ORO Study), 91-93, quote from 91.
- 3 ORO Study, 91-93; Ed[ward C.] Evanoh, *Darkmoon: Eighth Army Special Operations in the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995), 158-59.
- 4 ORO Study, 91.
- 5 BG (Ret) Glenn Muggelberg, COL (Ret) Paul W. Steinbeck, and LTC (Ret) Michael A. Matzko, Interview by COL Rod Paschall and Dr. Edward J. Drea, 15 November 1985, Project 85-S, Korean Partisan Operations, USAHEC, 14-15, Muggelberg quote from 15.
- 6 ORO Study, 91. More information on the incident has surfaced in recent years through declassified reports. According to Fifth Air Force, 6004<sup>th</sup> Air Intelligence Service Squadron, Air Intelligence Information Report #IR 3478-55, "USAF Personnel Possibly Alive in Communist Captivity," 19 October 1955, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD. Records list the missing aircrew present at the GREEN DRAGON site as: 1LT Harold P. Turner, 1LT Arthur R. Olsen, 2LT John P. Shaddick, 1LT Gilbert L. Ashley, Jr., AM2 Hidemaro S. Ishida The five suspected missing Americans were from the crew of a B-29A bomber that was downed by MiG fighters the night of 29 January 1953 about 10-12 miles south of P'yongyang, North Korea. According to the reports, the recovery aircraft was in voice communication with a person identifying himself as 1LT Ashley during the recovery mission. Ashley (?) provided them with a run-in heading and talked to them throughout. For more details, see: Defense Prisoner of War-Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), "Korean War Aircraft Loss Database" (KORWALD), on the Internet at: <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/korea/reports/air/>, last accessed on 12 March 2013.
- 7 "UN Partisan Forces," 7-8. The same source has dozens of other examples where friendly guerrillas were inadvertently engaged by Allied vessels or aircraft.
- 8 ORO Study, 36-39; Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," Vol. 1, DDO HP 283, July 1973, Extract, 122-23; Message, HQ, Korean Navy, Pusan, 17 January 1951, GF/Rush/127 Hah, included in 8086<sup>th</sup> Army Unit (AU), Armed Forces Far East (AFFE) Military History Detachment-3, "UN Partisan Forces in the Korean Conflict, 1951-1952," Project MHD-3, Center of Military History (CMH), Fort McNair, DC, (hereafter "UN Partisan Forces"), 29.
- 9 Boyd Hubbard, Jr., "Special Activities Unit Number One (Operating Instructions)," 5 March 1951; C.A. L. Dickey, "Guerrilla Activity-Sabotage-North Korea," 9 March 1951, "UN Partisan Forces"; Memorandum, "Guerrilla Activity - Sabotage - North Korea," 9 March 1951, in "UN Partisan Forces," 46-48; Memorandum to Chief of Staff, "Conference aboard the HMS Belfast, 14 March on Friendly Partisan Activity on West Coast of Korea," 17 March 1951, in "UN Partisan Forces," 59-60.
- 10 Justin M. Haynes, "Intelligence Failure in Korea: Major General Charles A. Willoughby's Role in the United Nations Command's Defeat in November, 1950" (master's thesis, Command and General Staff College, 1995), 8; Matthew B. Ridgway, *The Korean War* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 142; Roger F. Kropf, "The US Air Force in Korea: Problems that Hindered the Effectiveness of Air Power," *Airpower Journal* (Spring 1990), republished on the Internet at: <http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj90/spr90/3spr90.htm>, last accessed on 6 December 2012, 1-2; Peter T. Sinclair, II, "Men of Destiny: The American and Filipino Guerillas During the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines," School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2012, 38-41; Joint Chiefs of Staff Historical Division, "History of the Unified Command Plan, 1946-1977," Joint Chiefs of Staff Historical Study, 1977, 1-4, 11. Normal staff functioning places operations under the staff direction of the G-3. According to the U.S. Army's own doctrinal publication in place at that time (FM 31-21), the theater command should "organize a theater special forces command on the same level as the theater army, navy, and air" commands, and that "All units engaged in special forces operations and responsible to the theater commander are assigned to" that command (Department of the Army, FM 31-21, *Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare* [Washington, DC: GPO, October 1951], 21-31, quote from 25). By disregarding that doctrine, FEC created a dysfunctional organization with no authority to accomplish the operational tasks it was assigned.
- 11 Department of the Army, FM 31-21, *Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare* (Washington, DC: GPO, October 1951), 21-31, quote from 25). FEC habitually went against accepted doctrinal and procedural practices where guerrillas were concerned. Rather than simply applying the principles that had been developed in the crucible of past conflicts, FEC instead invented different ways of organizing for unconventional warfare operations. In general, their departures from accepted practices failed. A theater-level command for all special operations units would have solved most of the problems FEC identified.
- 12 Kropf, "The US Air Force in Korea," 1-2, quote from 2.
- 13 There are a number of critical studies on both the lack of 'jointness' in MacArthur's FEC and his propensity for controlling every aspect within his theater. For example, during WWII MacArthur refused to allow the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to operate within his theater because he believed it would report to external entities rather than solely through him. Along the same lines, MacArthur strongly resisted having the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operate in his theater, although pressure from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the political side forced him to grudgingly accept a CIA presence. See Joint History Office, "The History of the Unified Command Plan, 1946-1993," Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995, 11-16, 20-21; Haynes, "Intelligence Failure in Korea," 8.
- 14 ORO Study, 36.
- 15 ORO Study, 34-36; FEC Liaison Group, APO 301, "Subject: Guerrilla Activity - Sabotage - North Korea," 9 March 1951, in "UN Partisan Forces," 46-48; John P. Finnegan, "The Evolution of US Army HUMINT: Intelligence Operations in the Korean War," *Studies in Intelligence* 55, No. 2 (Extracts, June 2011), 60-61. FEC/LG had been originally formed under the cover name of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Counter-Intelligence Corps (CIC) Detachment (Finnegan, "Evolution of US Army HUMINT," 60-61).
- 16 Morning Report, "FEC Ln Gp 8240<sup>th</sup> AU, Hq & Sv Cmd GHQ FEC," 26 July 1951, NPRC; ORO Study, 36-41, quote from 37; U.S. Army, *Official Army Register, 1951* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1951), 174, 585; FEC Liaison Group, APO 301, "Subject: Guerrilla Activity - Sabotage - North Korea," 9 March 1951, in "UN Partisan Forces," 46-48; Finnegan, "Evolution of US Army HUMINT," 60-63.
- 17 Morning Report, "FEC Ln Gp 8240<sup>th</sup> AU, Hq & Sv Cmd GHQ FEC," 26 July 1951, NPRC; ORO Study, 36-41, quote from 37; U.S. Army, *Official Army Register, 1951* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1951), 174, 585; FEC Liaison Group, APO 301, "Subject: Guerrilla Activity - Sabotage - North Korea," 9 March 1951, in "UN Partisan Forces," 46-48; Finnegan, "Evolution of US Army HUMINT," 60-63. For more information regarding LTC Samuel V. Koster and the Army's guerrilla command, see the article in this issue and: Michael E. Krivdo, "Creating an Army Guerrilla Command, Part One: The First Six Months," *Veritas* 8, no. 2 (2012), 12-26.
- 18 U.S. Army, *Official Army Register, 1951*, 60; Morning Report, "FEC Ln Gp 8240<sup>th</sup> AU, Hq & Sv Cmd GHQ FEC," 1 August 1951, NPRC; Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., "Psychological and Unconventional Warfare, 1941-1962: Origins of a 'Special Warfare' Capability for the United States Army," U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1979, 9-11; U.S. Department of State, "Verbatim Minutes of a Meeting of the Intelligence Advisory Committee," Washington, DC, 3 December 1948, reprinted in *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter FRUS), 1945-1950, *Retrospective Volume, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, 881-92; FRUS, 892-902; Richard J. Aldrich, Gary D. Rawnsley, Ming-Yeh T. Rawnsley, eds., *The Clandestine Cold War in Asia, 1945-65: Western Intelligence, Propaganda, and Special Operations* (New York: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000), 37, quote from text; Stanley P. Hirshson, *General Patton: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2002), 495; Neil D. Lankford, ed., *OSS Against the Reich: The WWII Diaries of Colonel David K. E. Bruce* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1991), 143, see note 11 (231). COL Blakeney was a Regular Army Field Artillery officer with a WWII background in psychological warfare operations. On 26 July 1942, Blakeney became Chief of the Psychological Warfare Branch of the Army G-2, holding



- that position until it was dissolved on 31 December 1942. In July 1944, he served as the Press Relations Officer for GEN George S. Patton's Third Army and was relieved of those duties for a security violation. Sent to work in the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) Psychological Warfare Department, Blakeney recovered from that setback and worked in the Central Intelligence Group (CIG), a forerunner of the CIA, in the interwar years. In early 1950 he transferred to FEC to serve as an intelligence staff officer in the FEC's G-2 section before moving up to head the JSOB.
- 19 Senior CIA Representative Far East Command to Chief, FE, "Review of Combined Command Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK)," 6 March 1952, found online at <http://www.foia.cia.gov/search.asp>, accessed 21 April 2010. Operationally, the U.S. Navy commander in charge of island defense split his responsibilities into West Coast and East Coast Defense Commands. For most of the war the British Navy or Commonwealth Naval Forces handled the West Coast defenses, while the U.S. Navy exercised command over the East Coast islands (see: James A. Field, Jr., *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1962), 423; U.S. Navy Historical Division, "Korean War: Chronology of U.S. Pacific Fleet Operations," January–April 1952, available on the Internet at: <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron52a.htm>, last accessed 10 December 2012).
- 20 Senior CIA Representative Far East Command to Chief, FE, "Review of Combined Command Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK)," 6 March 1952, found online at <http://www.foia.cia.gov/search.asp>, accessed 21 April 2010; CIA, *Clandestine Services History*, "The Secret War in Korea, June 1950 to June 1952," CS Historical Paper No. 52, 17 July 1968, Extract, 74.
- 21 General Order 90, GHQ, FEC, 7 December 1951; General Order 975, HQ, EUSA, 10 December 1951; ORO Study, 36-37, 57, 64, quote from 64.
- 22 ORO Study, 36-37, 57, 64-66.
- 23 Thomas Reeka, interviewed by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 25 August 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 24 CCRAK abrogated what minimal authority it had in advising FEC/LG by issuing "no detailed operational directive . . . during the first year of operations." It did that by design because "it was felt that this experimental organization required time before its organization, functions and appropriate command relationships, both lateral and vertical, could be established without impeding natural growth and development" (see: "Covert & Clandestine Activities in Korea (JLS 53)," 11 February 1953, Digital National Security Archive, quotes from text).
- 25 ORO Study, 64-66; Richard M. Ripley, Interview with Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, and Mr. Eugene Piasecki, 28 July 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 26 LTC (Ret) Michael A. Matzko, interview by Dr. Edward J. Drea, 15 November 1985, United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, PA; FE Division, CIA, "The Secret War in Korea: June 1950 to June 1952," 11; "Covert & Clandestine Activities in Korea (JLS 53)."
- 27 Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., "The 8240th Army Unit: Unconventional Warfare in the Korean Conflict" *Special Forces: The First Fifty Years*, (Tampa, FL: Faircount, LLC, 2002), 110.
- 28 "Covert & Clandestine Activities in Korea (JLS 53)," 11 February 1953, Digital National Security Archive.
- 29 John K. Singlaub, *Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Summit Books, 1991), 181-82.
- 30 ORO Study, 64-66.
- 31 ORO Study, 66-69.
- 32 In WWII, Archibald W. Stuart was primarily involved with the Nisei and served as the Assistant Commandant of the Military Intelligence Service Language School (1942-44), and commander of the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section, G-2, Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA). After the war, he joined the Counter Intelligence Corps. In the Korean War, he commanded the 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. By this time, the head of CCRAK was a brigadier general.
- 33 ORO Study, 143-44.
- 34 ORO Study, 144.
- 35 ORO Study, 112.
- 36 Colonel Paul W. Steinbeck, interviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Martin W. Andresen, 15 November 1985, United States Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, PA, quote from text.
- 37 LTC Francis R. Purcell, Interviewed by LTC A[rthur].S. Daley and MAJ B[jilly].C. Mossman, 13 May 1953, included in "UN Partisans in the Korean Conflict," 252.
- 38 Former TF WOLFPACK Commander, Richard M. Ripley, interviewed by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, Dr. Michael E. Krivdo, Mr. Eugene Piasecki, 28 July 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, quote from text.
- 39 U.S. Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-18, *Special Forces Operations*, 5 March 2012, Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2-7.



By Michael E. Krivdo

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# West Coast Aircrew Recovery and the Guerrilla-Held Islands

A major problem faced by the United Nations Command (UNC) in Korea was the development of a workable escape and evasion (E&E) plan for recovering pilots and aircrews downed behind enemy lines. For the first year of the war, considerable effort and resources were expended by all services and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to establish evasion routes and guerrilla way stations that aviators in trouble could use. These early E&E plans attempted to provide blanket coverage over enemy territory so that pilots could be recovered wherever they went down.<sup>1</sup> The island enclaves that were held by the American-led guerrillas proved to be one of the few highlights in a flawed theater E&E plan.

Essentially, the Far East Command (FEC) developed a theater E&E plan that consisted of two different, but

overlapping pieces. The first component involved establishing an E&E network (of 'agents' and 'safe areas') in the interior of the peninsula. Aircrewmen or soldiers operating behind enemy lines were prebriefed to make contact with friendly Korean agents in designated areas. After linking up, the agents would then safeguard the evaders until they could be recovered by friendly forces.<sup>2</sup>

The second part of the plan included stationing air rescue assets on the several guerrilla-held islands off the North Korea coast. Those resources consisted of rescue boats, helicopters, and small guerrilla units trained to serve as recovery forces. Since these elements were forward-deployed behind enemy lines and covered most of the North Korean coastline, pilots in trouble could contact the rescue assets directly, inform them of their location, and await pickup.<sup>3</sup> This part of the plan worked well.



Sikorsky H-5A helicopter operating from Cho-do, an island held by American-run guerrillas off the northwest coast of North Korea. Both the Air Force and Navy rotated aircraft and crews on the guerrilla-held islands to extend their recovery range.



USAF Grumman SA-16 Albatross rescue amphibian. These aircraft ran many recovery missions along both coasts of Korea. Although the planes were normally stationed behind the Main Line of Resistance (MLR), the rescue craft also deployed forward to the guerrilla islands to better cover large Allied air missions.



A Sikorsky H-19 rescue helicopter operates from a field landing zone on one of the guerrilla-held islands. Facilities are primitive: a small dirt field was fenced off to provide a degree of security; a rough scaffold for facilitating maintenance; and barrels for hand refueling. For long-distance missions it was not unusual for the pilot to load extra barrels inside the H-19 to refuel along the route.



Because they operated from relatively secure forward positions, the island-based E&E assets experienced greater success than those that were supposed to operate in the interior of North Korea.<sup>4</sup> Establishing survivable agent networks or secure way stations in the interior of North Korea proved an exercise in futility. The Communists simply had very strong control of their citizens and easily detected every attempt to infiltrate guerrillas. Security personnel were suspicious of everyone, particularly

strangers or newly returned citizens. And since the North Korean police and military tightly restricted all movements and activities within their rear areas, attempts to set up safe areas failed miserably.<sup>5</sup>

By September 1952, after more than two years of trying to make the interior plan work, the CIA concluded that "the mission's E&E teams had almost no chance of success."<sup>6</sup> Why? In addition to the limits on movement, the agents' "cover was almost uniformly bad, the mission was vague and indefinite, [and] the problems of communication had not been properly solved."<sup>7</sup> The recovery agents inserted "with articles of clothing and equipment which would blow them, and they did not understand the nature of resistance work."<sup>8</sup> The overall assessment was that the agents "would be captured in a very short time and that the majority of them would be doubled."<sup>9</sup> One Agency report declared that "E&E operations as conducted by the CIA in Korea were not only ineffective but probably morally reprehensible" in terms of the lives lost trying to set up networks.<sup>10</sup> As far as can be determined, "no airman or POW was known to have been assisted by CIA-sponsored clandestine mechanisms."<sup>11</sup>



This F-86 Sabre fighter made an emergency landing on the flat beach of one of the guerrilla-held islands off the coast of North Korea.

Because of the failure to make the interior part of the E&E plan work, attention shifted to another aspect of the scheme that actually succeeded – the coastal portion of the plan. It became the default solution to do everything possible to avoid ditching in the interior. Pilots in trouble over the interior began to 'stretch' their flight to reach the shore, knowing that their chances of being rescued were





USAF 85-foot crash rescue boat at Cho-do. The Air Force maintained several such boats and crews on some of the more remote guerrilla-held islands during the war. These forward-deployed recovery assets were credited with many rescues and proved very successful. The crews developed good working relations with the American advisors and sometimes supported guerrilla insertions/extractions. The U.S. Navy also stationed rescue boats and crews on some of the guerrilla islands.

better there. Mission planners ran ingress and egress flight paths up the coastlines to avoid land-based Communist anti-aircraft positions and to take advantage of off-shore rescue assets should trouble arise. By keeping the northwest islands in friendly hands and available for use by recovery assets, the guerrillas made a valuable contribution to the Allied air effort. ▲

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## Endnotes

- 1 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), "Infiltration and Resupply of Agents in North Korea, 1952-1953," Vol. 1, CSHP 2.339, December 1972, Extract, 160-63; CIA, "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," Vol. 1, DDO HP 283, July 1973, Extract, 192-93. According to "Infiltration and Resupply of Agents in North Korea, 1952-1953," 160, the first E&E program initiated in Korea began "on 7 September 1950 at the request of General Partridge, Fifth Air Force."
- 2 CIA, "The Secret War in Korea, June 1950-June 1952," Clandestine Services History, A1-A2; CIA, "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," 191-93.
- 3 "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," 191-93; "Infiltration and Resupply of Agents in North Korea, 1952-1953," 162-63.
- 4 Rickey L. Rife, "Combat Search and Rescue: A Lesson We Fail to Learn," School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1994, 8; Earl H. Tilford, Jr., "Search and Rescue in Southeast Asia, 1961-1975" (Office of Air Force History, U.S. Air Force, Washington, DC, Government Printing Office, 1981), 13; and Robert F. Futrell, *Development of Aeromedical Evacuation in the USAF, 1909-1960*, U.S. Air Force Historical Study 23 (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, 1960), 539-40. According to these sources, the guerrilla-held islands allowed for the forward deployment of helicopters and other rescue assets. They recovered ten percent of all pilots and aircrew downed in North Korea. Without the ability to pre-position forward on the guerrilla-held islands, the early generation helicopters and boats might not have had sufficient range to be effective.
- 5 ORO Study, 75, 85, 99; "Infiltration and Resupply of Agents in North Korea, 1952-1953," 164-67; "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," 166-67.
- 6 "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," quote from 167.
- 7 "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," 167.
- 8 "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," 167.
- 9 "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," 167.
- 10 "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," 167.
- 11 "CIA in Korea, 1946-1965," 167.

This photo shows the diversity of boats supporting guerrilla activity off the coasts of North Korea. In the foreground is a captured *sampan*. Behind it is a barge and several coastal freighters that carried supplies and personnel to the islands. The West Coast guerrillas had hundreds of boats ranging from two-man 'wiggle' boats to *sampans* and junks equipped with 'hothead' diesel or marine engines. All helped to search for and recover downed pilots and aircrew.





# The CCRAK 'Navy'

by Troy J. Sacquety

The accompanying photos, procured from the Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and from private veterans' collections, illustrate just a few of the many types of vessels acquired and managed by CCRAK.

One of the roles of the Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK) was to provide logistics support and transportation for the Guerrilla Command. By November 1952, CCRAK managed to secure an authorization from the U.S. Air Force's 315<sup>th</sup> Air Division for the aerial delivery of 173,625 pounds of supplies/passengers per month.<sup>1</sup> However, this amount was not enough and CCRAK needed maritime lift assets to make up the shortfall.

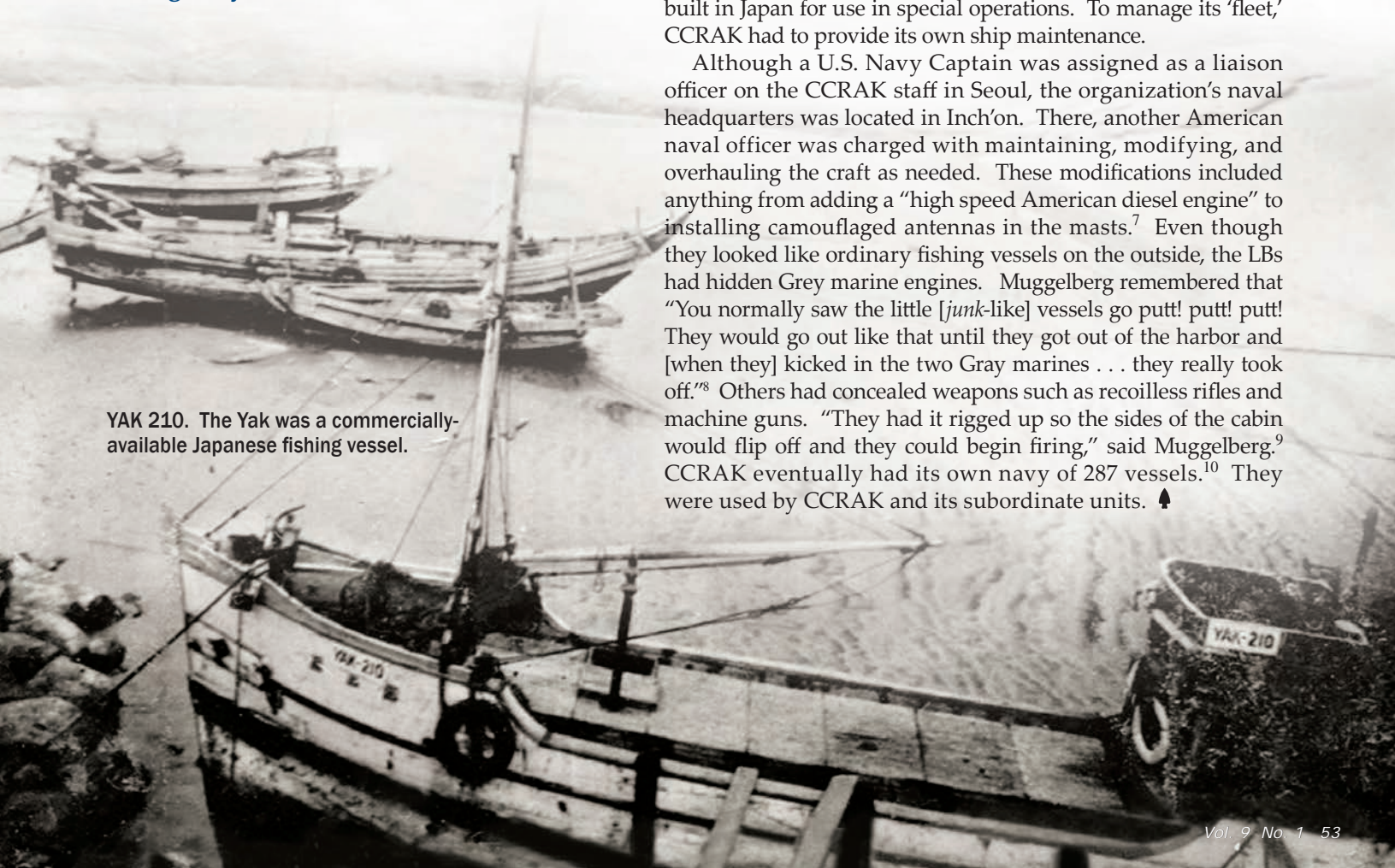
CCRAK owned some Army vessels, primarily Freight and Supply vessels (designated FS) and launches (designated as Q-boats). However, in early 1953, CCRAK had only two 500-ton FS craft and nine Q-boats.<sup>2</sup> Such a limited carrying capability would not even begin to address CCRAK's logistics and transportation needs.

The solution was to 'form' a motley fleet using locally-available *junk*-type sea craft. This had a precedent because since late 1950, the guerrillas had owned a small fleet of captured fishing craft (*junks*) that they used for sea transportation. Lieutenant Colonel Glenn E. Muggelberg, the CCRAK G-3, recalled that "A good share of those vessels were achieved by capture . . . [from] as far north as the mouth of the Yalu [River]."<sup>3</sup> Yet, the word 'capture' implies that the *junks* were taken from the North Korean military. When, in fact, a CCRAK report put the acquisition in more dubious terms, stating that the *junks* were acquired through "barter or privateering."<sup>4</sup> CCRAK used most of its *junks* to supply the partisan-held islands with regular issues of food (rice and dried fish), tobacco, and weapons.<sup>5</sup>

CCRAK also purchased other vessels in Japan using a \$2,300,000 allowance.<sup>6</sup> These particular vessels came in two types: Yakajimas, ('Yaks') were commercially-available Japanese fishing vessels, and Lewis and Brants (LBs) were specially designed and built in Japan for use in special operations. To manage its 'fleet,' CCRAK had to provide its own ship maintenance.

Although a U.S. Navy Captain was assigned as a liaison officer on the CCRAK staff in Seoul, the organization's naval headquarters was located in Inch'on. There, another American naval officer was charged with maintaining, modifying, and overhauling the craft as needed. These modifications included anything from adding a "high speed American diesel engine" to installing camouflaged antennas in the masts.<sup>7</sup> Even though they looked like ordinary fishing vessels on the outside, the LBs had hidden Grey marine engines. Muggelberg remembered that "You normally saw the little [*junk*-like] vessels go putt! putt! putt! They would go out like that until they got out of the harbor and [when they] kicked in the two Gray marines . . . they really took off."<sup>8</sup> Others had concealed weapons such as recoilless rifles and machine guns. "They had it rigged up so the sides of the cabin would flip off and they could begin firing," said Muggelberg.<sup>9</sup> CCRAK eventually had its own navy of 287 vessels.<sup>10</sup> They were used by CCRAK and its subordinate units. ▲

YAK 210. The Yak was a commercially-available Japanese fishing vessel.



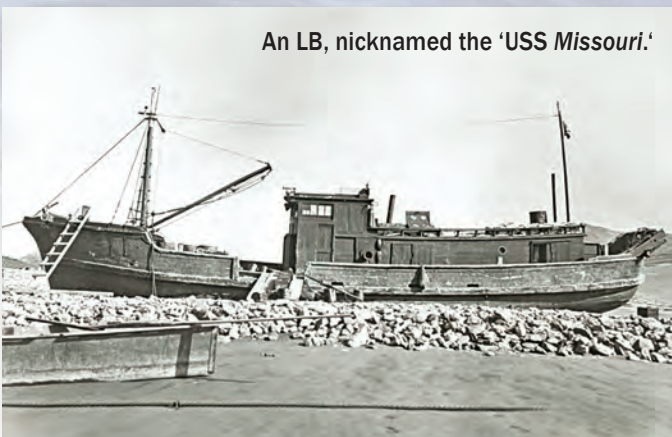




LTC Glenn E. Muggelberg



U.S. Army Landing Craft Utility (LCU)  
1255 carrying supplies for CCRAK  
subordinate units.



An LB, nicknamed the 'USS Missouri.'



A Landing Craft Mechanized (LCM) loads a truck.



315th Air Division patch

U.S. Air Force C 47 carrying supplies for CCRAK  
landing on Cho do Island beach.



The Tong A Ho, a Yak.



Yak 120



CCRAK crew rigging mast aboard a Yak.



Crew maneuvering a Yak into port.





Yak 190



Yak 130



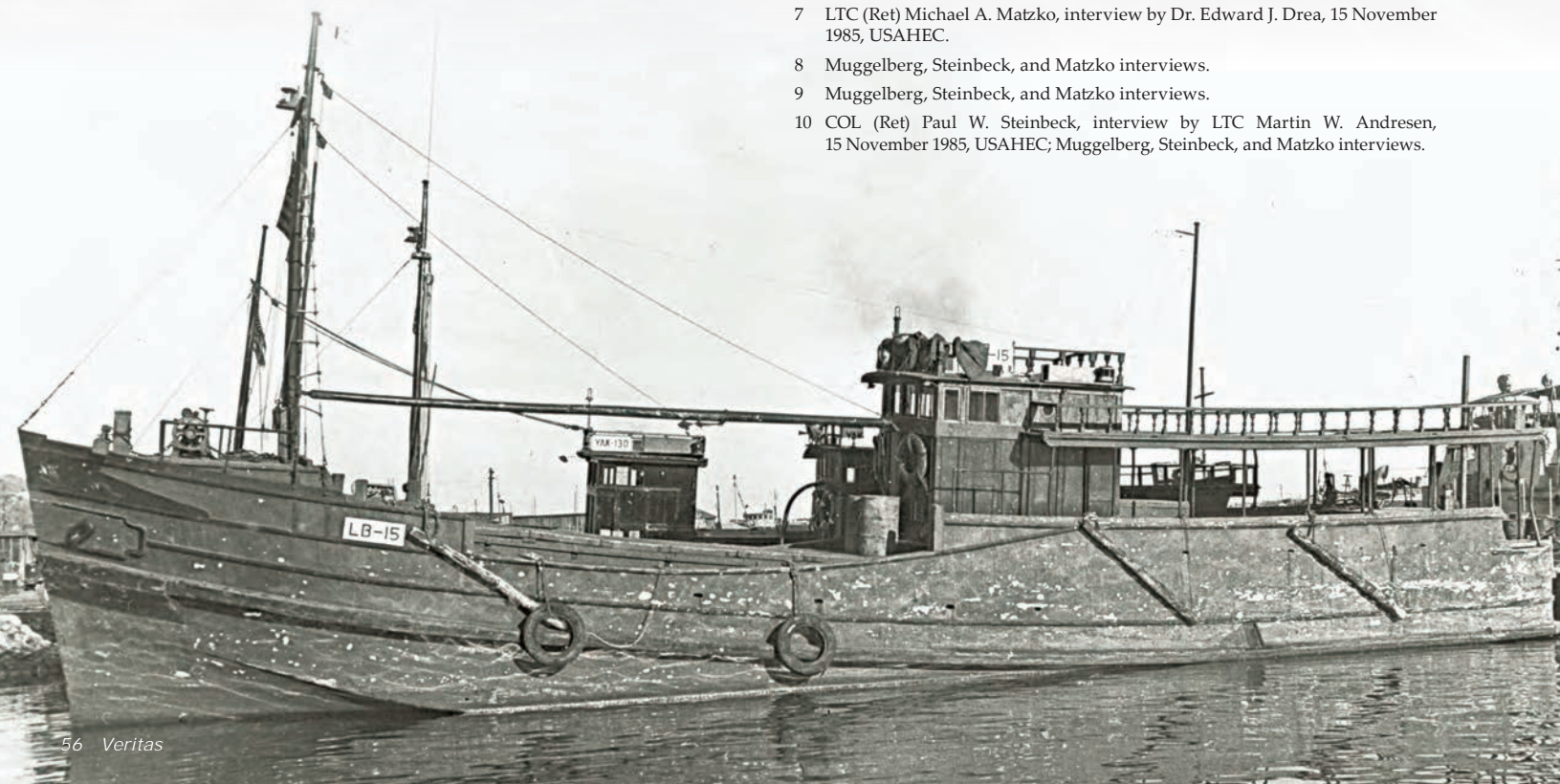
Yak 210



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## Endnotes

- 1 "Covert & Clandestine Activities in Korea (JLS 53)," 11 February 1953, copy provided by Dr. Jonathan Clemente.
- 2 "Covert & Clandestine Activities in Korea (JLS 53)."
- 3 BG (Ret) Glenn Muggelberg, COL (Ret) Paul W. Steinbeck, and LTC (Ret) Michael A. Matzko, interview by COL Rod Paschall and Dr. Edward J. Drea, 15 November 1985, United States Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC), Carlisle, PA.
- 4 "Covert & Clandestine Activities in Korea (JLS 53)."
- 5 LTC Francis R. Purcell, interviewed by LTC A.S. Daley and MAJ B.C. Mossman, contained in 8086th Army Unit, Military History Detachment, "UN Partisan Forces in the Korean Conflict 1951-52," Center of Military History, Fort McNair, Washington DC.
- 6 "Covert & Clandestine Activities in Korea (JLS 53)."
- 7 LTC (Ret) Michael A. Matzko, interview by Dr. Edward J. Drea, 15 November 1985, USAHEC.
- 8 Muggelberg, Steinbeck, and Matzko interviews.
- 9 Muggelberg, Steinbeck, and Matzko interviews.
- 10 COL (Ret) Paul W. Steinbeck, interview by LTC Martin W. Andresen, 15 November 1985, USAHEC; Muggelberg, Steinbeck, and Matzko interviews.





# A COMBAT FIRST

Army SF Soldiers in Korea, 1953-1955

By Kenneth Finlayson





**T**he Korean War is noteworthy in Army history for the first use of Army Special Forces (SF) soldiers in a combat theater. In 1953, ninety-nine graduates from the first two Special Forces Qualification Course classes deployed to Korea as individual replacements. Working alongside their conventional Army counterparts, they performed a variety of missions associated with the training and employment of guerrilla forces. Two, Second Lieutenant (2LT) Ivan M. Castro and Captain (CPT) Douglas W. Payne, paid the ultimate price for their service and were the first SF soldiers to die in combat. Some of the SF men remained in Korea until 1955, nearly two years after the signing of the Armistice. This article documents the experience of the SF soldiers who trained, advised, and ultimately demobilized the guerrillas.<sup>1</sup>

The Korean War (1950-1953) ended in a negotiated ceasefire with the armies of North Korea and Communist China opposing the forces of South Korea, the United States and the United Nations coalition along the 38th Parallel. The first year of fast-paced, fluid, ground combat up and down the Korean peninsula was followed by a gradual stalemate as the armies of both sides hardened their defensive positions and jockeyed for control of key terrain along the Main Line of Resistance (MLR).<sup>2</sup> While the conventional war ground to a halt, unconventional warfare (UW) operations continued on both coasts.

Far East Command (FEC) began to develop an UW capability in early 1951 by taking advantage of the large numbers of anti-Communist North Korean guerrillas on the northwest islands of Korea. This led to the formation of the Attrition Section, Miscellaneous Division, G-3, Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) on 15 January 1951.<sup>3</sup> The guerrilla unit went through a dizzying series of name changes and command relationships; from the Attrition Section, EUSA G-3, to the Miscellaneous Group, 8086th Army Unit (AU), EUSA on 5 May 1951; then to the Guerrilla Section under the FEC/Liaison Group (FEC/LG) (in Tokyo) and the FEC/Liaison Detachment,

Korea (FEC/LD[K]) (in Taegu). On 10 December 1951 the section was renamed the 8240th Army Unit, FEC G-2. Ultimately it came under the operational control of the Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK), 8242nd AU on 27 September 1952.<sup>4</sup> Throughout these many permutations, the focus remained on the guerrillas.

On 15 January 1953, another unit was formed, the Recovery Command, 8007th AU. The 8007th also used guerrillas to collect information related to UN prisoners of war and gather general combat intelligence. Like the guerrilla command, the Recovery Command fell under the staff supervision of the FEC G-2. In September, 1953 it became the 8112th Army Unit.<sup>5</sup> Most of these changes reflected attempts to create a theater-level command to direct UW operations, but had little effect on the basic mission of the guerrillas and the American advisors who trained, supplied and employed them. As the war progressed, the requirements for support grew.

The mission of the guerrilla command, as defined in the Table of Distribution was twofold. The first was: "to develop and direct partisan warfare by training in sabotage indigenous groups and individuals both within Allied lines and behind enemy lines," and second; "to supply partisan groups and agents operating behind enemy lines by means of water and air transportation."<sup>6</sup> To accomplish these missions, in early 1952 the guerrilla command divided into two elements for operations and support.

Ultimately, three sub-commands controlled guerrilla operations; initially LEOPARD BASE and later WOLFPACK on the West Coast, and Task Force (TF) KIRKLAND on the East Coast. The support element, BAKER Section, was initially located at the EUSA Ranger Training School at Kijang near Pusan, and used C-46s and C-47s to support airborne training and to conduct aerial resupply and agent insertions. BAKER Section later moved to K-16 Airfield outside Seoul, after the capital was retaken a second time.<sup>7</sup>



The anti-Communist guerrillas occupying the islands off the coast of Korea provided a valuable source of manpower to the UN forces. American Special Forces advisors helped to train the guerrillas in the late stages of the war.



The Headquarters of the 8240th AU in Seoul. The administration and logistical support to the American advisors emanated from this unit of the guerrilla command.



Far East Command  
SSI



Eighth United  
States Army SSI





## Origins of the term 'Donkeys'

The origins of the term 'Donkey' for identifying West Coast guerrilla units are unclear, but its use began early at WILLIAM ABLE Base. One probable origination is related to COL McGee's first speech to the guerrilla leaders on Paengnyong-do. In that meeting he advised them to not be rash, but instead "behave like the mule which [when entangled in wire] stubbornly, patiently awaits the arrival of outside help." His interpreter substituted the more familiar 'donkey' for mule, and the name apparently stuck. Another possible origin was put forward by an early Donkey leader who stated "the generator of the [AN/GRC-9] radio looked like a Korean donkey or ass. When you crank the generator...you have to ride on the generator which looks like a rider on the back of a donkey." Regardless of how the term originated, individual guerrilla units began referring to themselves after McGee's visit as 'Donkeys.' Units became identified as a numbered 'Donkey' (example: 'Donkey 6').

"Darragh Letter," 13; "UN Partisan Forces," 93-94; see also Kenneth Finlayson, "Wolfpacks and Donkeys: Special Forces Soldiers in the Korean War," *Veritas* 3, No. 3 (2007), 32-40.

On the west coast, LEOPARD BASE, originally called WILLIAM ABLE BASE, was located on Paengnyŏng-do.<sup>8</sup> Formed in February 1951, it supported roughly twelve thousand men organized into fifteen units referred to as numbered Donkeys. The LEOPARD area of operations was generally above the 38th Parallel to the west of the Ongjin Peninsula, reaching as far north as Taehwa-do near the mouth of the Yalu River that formed the Chinese-North Korean border.<sup>9</sup> Eight Donkeys were located on Cho-do and the remaining seven on other islands. An advisor to Donkey 1, Sergeant (SGT) Alex R. Lizardo's experience was typical.

Enlisting in July 1951, Alex Lizardo attended Infantry Basic Training at Fort Ord, California and Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia. Promoted to Sergeant (SGT) within eleven months of enlisting, he was sent to the FEC/LD (K). Arriving in June 1952, SGT Lizardo

remained there for the next six months. After returning to Camp Drake, Japan for additional training, he was assigned to LEOPARD in November 1952 to be an advisor to Donkey 1.<sup>10</sup>

"Donkey 1 was out on Kirin-do. We Americans did not usually accompany the raiding parties on-shore," recounted SGT Lizardo. "I was not a school-trained Special Forces guy, but I was later awarded the SF Tab [and Combat Infantryman's Badge] for my time in 8240."<sup>11</sup> His assignment to LEOPARD coincided with the height of guerrilla activity. LEOPARD had been operational a year when the third guerrilla element, WOLFPACK, was organized (January 1952).

WOLFPACK, composed of eight sub-units designated WOLFPACK 1 thru 8, totaled 3,800 partisans.<sup>12</sup> The headquarters was on the large island of Kangwha-do west of Seoul. WOLFPACK 1 performed base security on



## **“Our mission was to harass and interdict the rear areas. We conducted raids and ambushes and laid mines along the MSRs [Main Supply Routes].”**

**— MAJ Richard M. Ripley**

Kangwha-do. The other units were located on adjacent islands south of the 38th Parallel.

WOLFPACK conducted operations behind enemy lines in the southern portion of the Ongjin Peninsula.<sup>13</sup> Armor Major (MAJ) Richard M. Ripley commanded WOLFPACK in the spring of 1952. “Our mission was to harass and interdict the rear areas. We conducted raids and ambushes and laid mines along the MSRs [Main Supply Routes].”<sup>14</sup> As the war stalemated, LEOPARD and WOLFPACK grew with the arrival of more anti-Communist North Korean refugees.

By late 1952, the guerrilla units on the West Coast were actively raiding the North Korean mainland to harass the enemy and disrupt traffic along the MSRs.<sup>15</sup> LEOPARD reported a strength of 7,002 guerrillas and WOLFPACK, 7,015.<sup>16</sup> A compilation of the two unit operational reports for the week of 15-21 November 1952 reflected 63 raids and 25 patrols against the North Korean coast, claiming an estimated 1,382 enemy casualties.<sup>17</sup> The increasingly robust partisan forces (and their many dependents), were difficult to control, supply, and feed. The situation dictated a reorganization in order to streamline operations.

In 1953, Guerrilla Command labeled their sub-elements the United Nations Partisan Forces in Korea (UNPFK), but retained the headquarters names LEOPARD and WOLFPACK.<sup>18</sup> The separate Donkeys and Wolfpack sub-elements were reorganized into five infantry regiments and one airborne infantry regiment. The non-airborne units were called the Partisan Infantry Regiments (PIR) 1st, 2nd, 5th and 6th. TF KIRKLAND, conducting operations on the East Coast, became the 3rd PIR. The airborne regiment became the 1st Partisan Airborne Infantry Regiment (PAIR). The regiments retained their

original North Korean leaders and referred to themselves as Wolfpacks and Donkeys. American advisors worked at the regimental level and below or served as UNPFK staff. It was during this period of reorganization that the request for Special Forces soldiers to serve in Korea was initiated by Brigadier General (BG) Robert A. McClure.

From the beginning of the war, McClure, the Army Chief of the Office of Psychological Warfare (OCPW), closely followed the UW activities in Korea. He was dissatisfied with the guerrilla operations, calling them “minor in consequence and sporadic in nature.”<sup>19</sup> The Psywar general was actively working to develop a special operations capability in the Army.

Within the OCPW, McClure created a Special Operations Division, staffed with veterans of World War II UW units. On his staff was Colonel (COL) Aaron Bank (the Office of Strategic Services), COL Melvin R. Blair (Merrill’s Marauders), and COL Wendell Fertig and Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Russell W. Volckmann (Philippine guerrilla leaders). After nearly a year of staff work, on 27 March 1952 the Army approved the establishment of a Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.<sup>20</sup>

The Center organization included a Special Forces Department responsible for the training of the new ‘Special Forces’ soldiers. Shortly after the founding of the Center, in June 1952, COL Aaron Bank stood up the 10th Special Forces Group (SFG). As trained Special Forces troops became available, BG McClure repeatedly urged the Far East Command to request them, sending messages in November 1952 and again in January 1953.<sup>21</sup>

FEC finally asked that fifty-five officers and nine enlisted men from the 10th SFG be levied for Korea. COL Fillmore

**A guerrilla formation. Both LEOPARD BASE and WOLFPACK organizations were supplied and equipped by the U.S. The level of support depended on the unit strength, a number that often varied widely from one day to the next.**



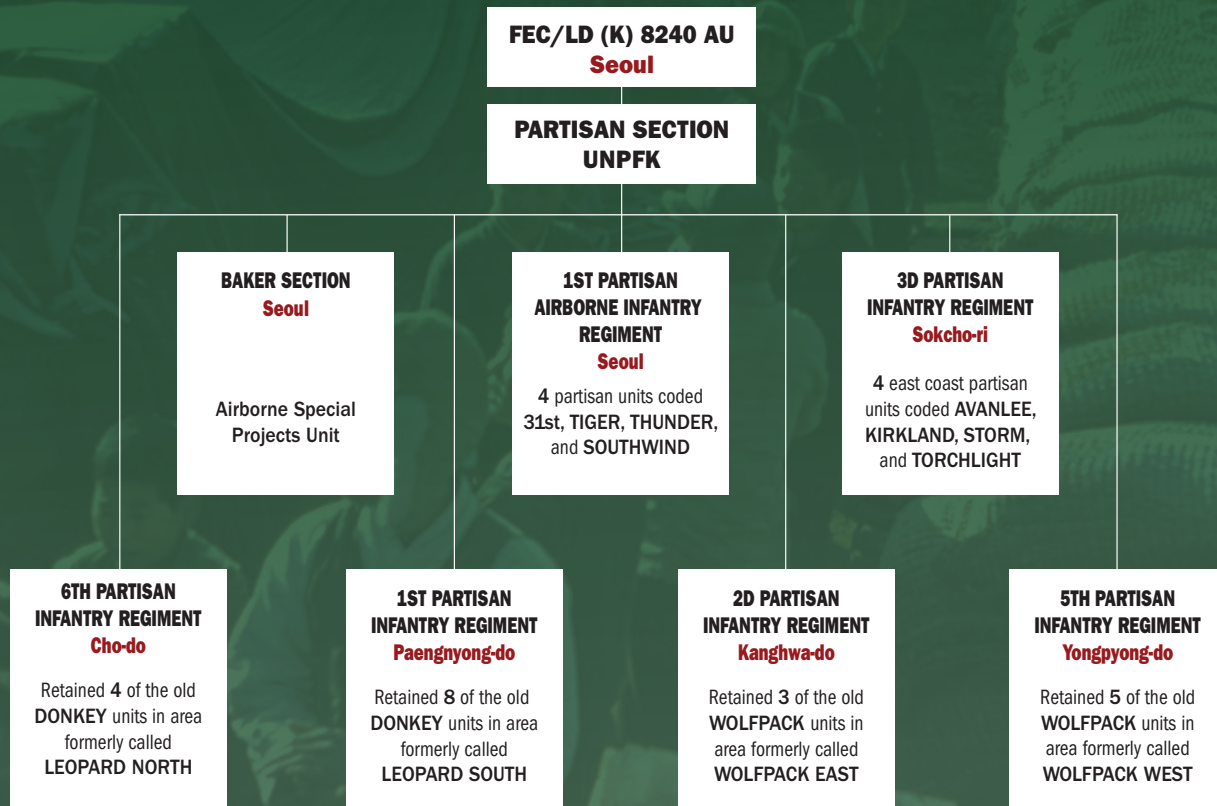
**In 1953 the LEOPARD and WOLFPACK units were reorganized into Partisan Infantry Regiments. American advisors worked with the guerrilla chain-of-command at the regiment down to the guerrilla companies.**





# Organization of Partisan Operating-Level Units

April 1953



**“We were put in the Far East Intelligence School. The three-week course covered maritime operations, raids, ambushes, demo, and put a lot of emphasis on the Korean tides and their effect on operations.”**

**— 1LT Charles W. Norton**

K. Mearns, head of the Special Forces Department, visited Korea in early 1953 to see the guerrilla operations first-hand.<sup>22</sup> Soon after his visit, the first contingent of SF troops arrived in theater. Ultimately, ninety-nine Special Forces men, (seventy-seven officers and twenty-two enlisted soldiers) deployed from Fort Bragg in five groups between February and September 1953.<sup>23</sup>

After graduating from Class #2 of the Special Forces Qualification Course, newly-promoted Infantry First Lieutenant (1LT) Charles W. ‘Charley’ Norton reported to Camp Stoneman, CA, enroute to Korea. As part of the fourth cycle, 1LT Norton flew to Camp Drake, Japan by Air Force C-54 *Skymaster*. There the new SF arrivals received additional training before going to Korea.

“We were put in the Far East Intelligence School. The three-week course covered maritime operations, raids, ambushes, demo, and put a lot of emphasis on the Korean

tides and their effect on operations,” Norton recalled.<sup>24</sup> Not everyone in the class was Special Forces. “There were Military Intelligence guys who were going to run agents into North Korea. We had maybe thirty guys in the class.”<sup>25</sup> 1LT Rueben L. Mooradian’s impression of that preparatory training was of “two ridiculous weeks of intelligence training and a mission planning exercise to capture a North Korean general.”<sup>26</sup> After completing the course, the Special Forces soldiers were sent to the guerrilla command headquarters in Seoul where each received orders.

1LT Norton was assigned to LTC Paul Sapieha’s 2nd PIR on Kanghwa-do. “My first job was as the S-3 [operations officer], which I held for about six weeks. [Second Lieutenant (2LT)] Joe Johnson came out with me. He was the S-4 [supply officer]. His job was to keep track of rice.”<sup>27</sup> The 2nd PIR had three battalions; the 1st and 2nd



conducting operations and the 3rd battalion providing base security and training new recruits. The guerrillas received marksmanship and demolitions training from the American advisors. After his brief stint as S-3, 1LT Norton moved across the island to advise the WOLFPACK 1 commander. By the time the Special Forces soldiers arrived, the guerrilla command had a well-developed supply system and good medical support.

During World War II, Master Sergeant (MSG/E-7) Robert W. Downey was a medic in the artillery. He was assigned to the 1st PIR in March 1952. "We received our medical supplies through the FEC supply system. We had Dr. Claman [1LT Maurice A. Claman, a surgeon] who covered all the islands on a two-to-four week circuit. Our MEDEVAC capability was good, [light fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters] out of Inch'on Airport back to the 121st Evac Hospital on the mainland."<sup>28</sup> MSG Downey's duties included medical training for the guerrillas and taking care of the dependents on the island.

"I tried to conduct classes on basic first aid for those selected to act as medics," said Downey. "More time was devoted to treating the family members present. We saw

lots for colds, skin rashes, and infections. There were so many family members around and they constantly needed medical treatment."<sup>29</sup> For the SF advisors, keeping the guerrillas equipped, trained, and fed was their first priority.

1LT Myron J. Layton, another graduate of the second Special Forces Qualification Class, underwent training at Camp Drake, before being assigned to the 6th PIR on Yong-yu-do. "Our job was to keep the training schedule moving, going from one company to another. Raids and ambushes were the main subjects," said Layton. In addition to training, the Americans were responsible for the resupply of the units on the widely scattered islands. "The LSTs [Landing Ship, Tank] would bring the supplies, 100-pound bags of rice, and we would hump it off the beach. There were C-rations for us," recalled Layton.<sup>30</sup> In addition to rice, uniforms, equipment, and ammunition were given to the guerrillas.

The equipment issued was not always first-rate. "We received uniforms for issue from the hospital. Many had bullet holes in them," said Layton. "We'd get size twelve boots for guys with size six feet. Most of them wore tennis shoes."<sup>31</sup>

Ninety-nine Special Forces soldiers deployed to Korea from the 10th Special Forces Group. COL Aaron Bank, commander of the 10th SFG (2nd from left) and COL Charles H. Karlstadt, Commandant of the Psywar Center and School (4th from left) observe 10th SF Group training.



WOLFPACK 1 in formation on Kangwha-do. After brief stints as staff officers, 1LTs Charles W. Norton and Joseph Johnson served as advisors with WOLFPACK 1.



Supply room on Kangwha-do. A solid, windowless building was a prerequisite for the storage of supplies to prevent the entrance of rats and the exit of supplies.



A young guerrilla with an M-1 Garand rifle. Boots were not the only equipment that was often too big for the user.





Supplies reached the guerrilla units by sea. The stone causeways were the landing areas where the supplies were off-loaded into U.S. Army trucks.



**1LT Reuben L. Mooradian** received two weeks of training at the Far East Command Intelligence School before joining the 1st Partisan Infantry Regiment on Yo-do.



**1LT Myron J. Layton (L) and 1LT Murl Tullis** were graduates of Special Forces Class #2. Assigned to the 6th PIR in April 1953, Layton found his primary mission was "to keep the training schedule moving" as the war wound down.



**2LT Joseph M. Castro** was killed while on operations with WOLFPACK 8. He was the first Special Forces soldier killed in combat.

The lack of quality equipment did not significantly affect UW operations. At this late stage of the war (mid-summer 1953), the interest in fighting was rapidly waning. The Special Forces soldiers focused on training the PIRs. The large guerrilla presence on the islands figured prominently in the Armistice negotiations. The presence of anti-Communist elements on islands off their coastline particularly rankled the North Koreans. Post-Armistice control of these islands was a contentious issue. Consequently, the U.S and South Korea continued to keep a military presence on the off-shore islands during the discussions.

The Special Forces personnel in the first three rotations experienced a higher operational tempo and a greater threat from the Communist forces. Two Special Forces soldiers in the early cycles became casualties during operations in 1953. Infantry 2LT Joseph M. Castro with WOLFPACK 8 was killed on 17 May 1953 while crossing a rice paddy dike during a daylight operation on the mainland. Infantry CPT Douglas W. Payne died on 21 July 1953 when his base on Sui-do was attacked and overrun by North Korean forces. These were the first two Special Forces soldiers to die in combat and the only fatalities among the SF deployed from Fort Bragg. After their deaths, guerrilla command directed American advisors to "use judgment and caution" if accompanying their guerrilla elements during operations on the mainland.<sup>32</sup>

Those SF who came in the final two levies from Fort Bragg experienced the war's drawdown. The guerrillas were not interested in being the last casualties of the war. In the months before the signing of the Armistice on 27 July 1953, the number of raids on the mainland declined dramatically. While working with the guerrilla units on the islands was the primary SF mission, not all the Special Forces soldiers ended up as advisors.

A number of the SF soldiers were assigned to the guerrilla command Tactical Liaison Office (TLO). Small U.S. Army intelligence teams inserted North Korean and Chinese defectors and some South Koreans on foot through the frontline infantry divisions to collect battlefield intelligence about the enemy in front of the UN units. The experiences of the Special Forces soldiers



**“There was very little done to prepare to go; no special training, no advance briefings. Once we were on orders, we got some leave and then reported to Camp Stoneman.”**

**— 1LT Earl L. Thieme**

performing TLO duties were explained in *Veritas* Vol. 8 No. 2.<sup>33</sup> A few SF troops were assigned to the 8007th AU, whose varied missions included the recovery of downed UN pilots, the gathering of information on UN POWs, and the collection of general battlefield intelligence.

1LT Earl L. Thieme was part of the third group of SF soldiers levied for Korea in March 1953. Trained in the 10th SFG at Fort Bragg, Thieme recalls that “there was very little done to prepare to go; no special training, no advance briefings. Once we were on orders, we got some leave and then reported to Camp Stoneman.”<sup>34</sup> When 1LT Thieme got to Camp Drake, Japan, he discovered that he was being assigned to the 8007th AU Recovery Command. Their mission was to gather information on Prisoner-of-War camps in North Korea where Americans might be held. Four other Special Forces soldiers, CPT Francis W. Dawson, 1LT Warren E. Parker, 1LT Sam C. Sarkesian, and 1LT Leo F. Siefert also served with Thieme in the 8007th. “The FEC G-2 gave us the mission. He told us it was Top Secret and to get over there ASAP,” said Thieme.<sup>35</sup> At the 8007th headquarters in Seoul, the men got their assignments. The unit conducted agent insertions on both coasts to find and verify Communist POW camps in North Korea.

1LT Sam Sarkesian commanded the 8007th AU Recovery Command Team #1. He was sent to Cho-do (West Coast)

with a sergeant and two enlisted men.<sup>36</sup> His mission was two-fold: to establish escape and evasion nets for downed U.S. and UN pilots, and to gather intelligence on camp locations. Confiscated Korean *junks* were used to insert agents on the mainland. They were to return to a pre-arranged point after a specific number of days for pick-up. After recovery, the information they gathered would be collected and processed. Most of Sarkesian’s agents failed to return for extraction.<sup>37</sup> His area of operations changed after the Armistice, when all friendly troops were evacuated to new sites south of the 38th Parallel.

1LT Reuben Mooradian had to move his guerrillas from Yo-do south to Yuk-do. There he assisted with the training of 1st PIR until leaving for the 77th SFG at Fort Bragg in July 1954.<sup>38</sup> As the guerrillas left the South Korean islands, they were replaced by ROK Marine and Army units.

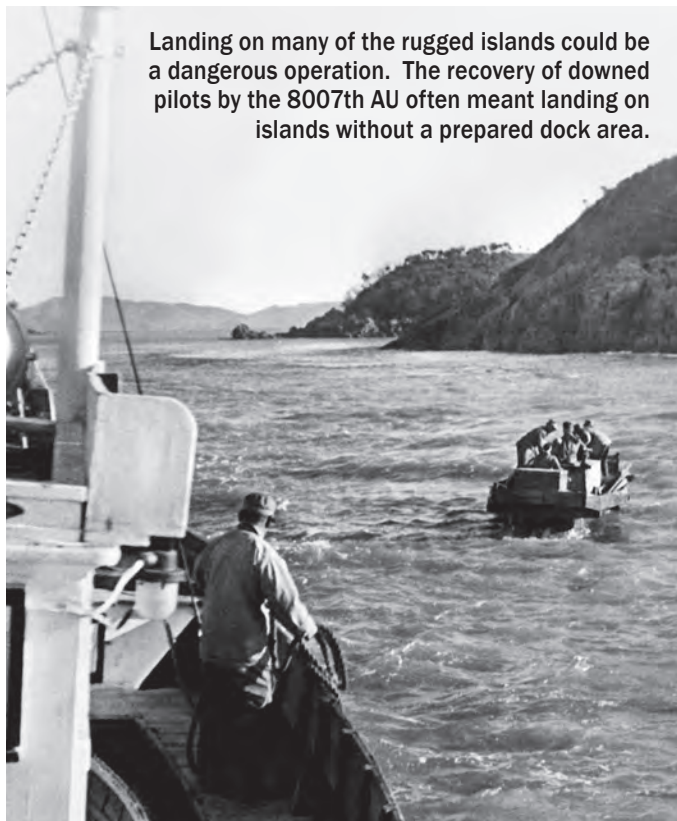
With the signing of the Armistice, 1LT Sarkesian moved his unit south from Cho-do to Paengnyŏng-do. From there he continued to insert agents until leaving Korea in March, 1954. “We learned a lot of lessons, but we did not accomplish very much. Unfortunately, the lessons learned were not put into any official documents,” Sarkesian said. “We expended a lot of energy for little result. I wish we had better briefings and training before we went. There was a total lack of coordination.”<sup>39</sup> Similar missions were run on the East Coast by other elements of the 8007th.

1LT Warren E. Parker commanded a detachment on the East Coast at Sokch’o-ri. His mission was to gather battlefield intelligence. He coordinated with the Navy to escort his motorized *junks* during insertions and extractions.<sup>40</sup> Parker’s detachment did not train the personnel being inserted. The agents were dropped off shortly before they left on their mission. The 8007th provided security, some supplies, and transported the agents to their insertion point. Some material supplied to the agents was quite valuable.

1LT Earl Thieme remembered several trips to Tokyo to collect gold and wristwatches for the agents going on missions.<sup>41</sup> Thieme was assigned through two unit designation changes; 8007th to 8112th on 24 September 1953 and then 8112th to 8157th on 5 January 1955.<sup>42</sup> Although airdropping agents behind the lines was discontinued after the Armistice, the ground and sea insertions continued until 1955. The majority of the Special Forces personnel continued working with the guerrillas.

By summer 1953, the Armistice negotiations were almost done. The ranks of North Korean partisans, some of whom had been on the islands since 1950, had been greatly reduced by losses and desertions. Many of the newcomers were South Korean. “The leadership was still people who came out of the north,” noted 1LT Charley Norton, “but the replacements were made up of

Landing on many of the rugged islands could be a dangerous operation. The recovery of downed pilots by the 8007th AU often meant landing on islands without a prepared dock area.







8007th personnel, left to right, 1LT Sam C. Sarkesian, 1LT Warren E. Parker, CPT Francis W. Dawson, 2LT Earl L. Thieme and 1LT Leo F. Siefert at Camp Drake, Japan. The men are graduates of Class #3 of the Special Forces Course.



8112th AU Recovery Command Patch

1LT Sam C. Sarkesian, commander of Detachment #1, 8112th. He was responsible for the establishment of escape and evasion networks and the rescue of downed airmen.

guys from Seoul and Inch'on who were dodging the ROK Army [draft]. The partisans were a lot better deal."<sup>43</sup> MAJ Richard M. Ripley recalled that, "things were locked in as far as the war went. The guerrillas knew the country was going to be divided in the end, so it was tough to ask them to sacrifice too much."<sup>44</sup> Still, unauthorized raids on the mainland continued after the Armistice, because a handful of Americans could not prevent them.

"When we got there, there wasn't much of the war left," noted 1LT Charley Norton. "The Koreans could sense it was winding down. Still, we continued to run operations against the mainland. Usually about ninety partisans would go. This number was dictated by the number that could fit on a fishing [sailing] *junk*. Usually thirty per *junk*, with one motor *junk* pulling three fishing *junks*. We gave the fisherman rice to use their boats."<sup>45</sup> The raids were against the North Korean Army and Border Constabulary units manning the coast. The advisory mission after the Armistice entailed demobilizing the armed guerrillas, a delicate, complex and sensitive mission.

With the cessation of hostilities, the South Korean government faced the dilemma of assimilating large, well-armed, American-trained guerrilla units composed primarily of North Koreans as well as displaced civilians. The South Korean solution was to assimilate the guerrillas units into the ROKA, an action that involved relocation. 1LT Charley Norton recalled, "The transition was a very messy thing. The ROKs needed to get control, but it took from July 1953 to April 1954 to process the partisans for the transition. They did not replace the U.S. forces [advisors] so we stayed with the partisans, keeping them supplied and trained until the spring of 1954."<sup>46</sup> Some of the guerrilla leaders were given commissions in the ROK Army, which helped maintain order within the units during demobilization and movement off the islands. It was a lengthy and painstaking process that tested the mettle of the American advisors.

2LT Maurice H. Price, a Regular Army officer who later served in Special Forces, was assigned in September 1953 as a company advisor in the 2nd PIR on Kyo dong-do. Specifics about the demobilization process were lacking. "Initially, all we had were rumors [about demobilization]," Price said. "Every day one of the NCOs would go to Kangwha-do [2nd PIR headquarters] but there was nothing official at first."<sup>47</sup> The two principal tasks involved getting an accurate headcount for each guerrilla unit and collecting crew-served weapons, pyrotechnics and ammunition before leaving the islands. Neither was easy.

"The distribution of rice was the rationale for the weekly headcounts. It was clear that we were getting inflated numbers," Price recalled. "Early one morning, one of my NCOs went out with an interpreter while we were holding formation in my company. From a hilltop they watched as one hundred guerillas double-timed across the island after our formation ended to join the other company before we went over to count them."<sup>48</sup> Accounting for weapons and ammunition proved just as difficult.

"The island [Kyo dong-do] once had gold mines and there were small caves all over the place to hide weapons and pyro," Price remembered. "It took a while to find the stuff and collect it. We had ordnance [weapons maintenance] teams come out and the storyline was that they were there to inspect the machineguns and mortars. In reality, we were getting it under our control."<sup>49</sup> For Price, the advisor role was a mixed blessing. "The training was valuable, but the isolation could be tough," he said. "Demobilizing the guerrillas was a brutal business. At times you had to be a bald-faced liar."<sup>50</sup> The preparation began in January 1954 and picked up speed until March.

1LT Norton along with Wolfpack 1, (some five hundred guerrillas and families), and the 2nd PIR (eight hundred plus dependents) were shipped by LST to Cheju-do, the primary reception and processing point for partisans



transitioning into the ROK Army.<sup>51</sup> 2LT Maurice Price likewise accompanied his guerrillas south.

"The movement was done in one day from Kangwhado. It was a contract deal; the [WWII-era] Navy LST had a Japanese crew. Charley Norton and I were the only Caucasians on the boat," Price remembered. "When we arrived, the ROK Army and Navy were waiting for us. The Good Samaritan stuff ended at that point. Most of the guerrillas were strip-searched when they came ashore."<sup>52</sup> After this mission, 2LT Price finished up his tour as a rifle company executive officer with the 2nd Infantry (Indianhead) Division. He left Korea for Fort Bragg, where he was assigned to the 77<sup>th</sup> SFG. His experience as

a guerrilla advisor contributed to his later assignments in Special Forces. What was missing was a formal program to collect and use the experiences gained by the advisors.

"At the [initial] selection process at Camp Drake, we were told not to expect publicity. It led to the 'silent professional' mentality," Price recalled. "When we were debriefed on leaving the 8240th, we were told not to talk about the tour. They placed heavy emphasis on our not drawing any attention to our experiences."<sup>53</sup> Consequently, the knowledge and lessons learned by these first SF advisors were not disseminated to the 10th and 77th SFGs.

The Korean War was the first employment of Special Forces to a combat theater. All SF soldiers sent to Korea were individual replacements working with other Army personnel detailed to guerrilla elements. No SFOD-Alphas (ODA) deployed to Korea for the war. "There was never any plan to run twelve-man teams," recalled 1LT Charley Norton. "We could have effectively employed one ODA per regiment, but the teams were all back at Fort Bragg [77<sup>th</sup> SFG] or enroute to Germany [10<sup>th</sup> SFG]."<sup>54</sup> This was due in large part because, throughout its existence, guerrilla command was never configured along doctrinal lines established in the Army's Field Manual 31-21, *Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare* where the ODAs could have been properly employed.<sup>55</sup>

The late arrival of Special Forces-trained personnel in the last months of the war makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the SF training programs. Their commitment to FEC demonstrated that the partisan



Towing a sailing *junk*. Often one motorized *junk* would tow three sailing *junks* on an operation.

2LT Earl L. Thieme (foreground) and an unidentified enlisted man check their map during a reconnaissance north of Seoul in the winter of 1954. The coming of the Armistice did not end the Special Forces presence in Korea. Some of the soldiers remained until 1955.







Roll call for a guerrilla unit. As 2LT Maurice H. Price found out, the guerrillas would attempt to pad the numbers in formation to get a larger share of the food resupply.

**“The distribution of rice was the rationale for the weekly headcounts. It was clear that we were getting inflated numbers.” — 2LT Maurice H. Price**

advisory mission was a valid UW skill. It showed the Army that SF could train indigenous forces to support conventional forces. These same skills form the cornerstone of the Special Forces UW mission today. 📌

*The author would like to thank the many veterans who gave generously of their time for interviews and provided the photographs incorporated into this article.*

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## Endnotes

- 1 This article is based on an earlier effort, “Wolfpacks and Donkeys: Special Forces Soldiers in the Korean War”, by Kenneth Finlayson, published in *Veritas*, Vol 3, No 3, 2007, pgs 31-40. It incorporates material gathered since 2007.
- 2 With few significant changes, the Main Line of Resistance in October 1951 became the Demilitarized Zone with the signing of the Armistice. It remains in existence today. See Walter G. Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front* (Washington DC, Center of Military History, 1992), 17-20, 36-40, 45-47, 507-508.
- 3 HQ, United States Army Forces, Far East, Technical Memorandum ORO-T-64, *UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954*, dated 19 September 1956, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle Barracks, PA 30-36. Hereafter referred to as the ORO Study.
- 4 Michael Krivdo, “Creating an Army Guerrilla Command: Part One, The First Six Months,” *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 8 No. 2, 2012, 12-26. (For the purpose of clarity, the various permutations of the guerrilla unit name will be referred to collectively as guerrilla command unless otherwise noted).
- 5 Gordan L. Rottman, *Korean War Order of Battle: United States, United Nations, and Communist Ground, Naval, and Air Forces, 1950-1953* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 2002), 15, 57.
- 6 Headquarters, Eighth U.S. Army Korea, Table of Distribution No 80-8086, Miscellaneous Group, 8086th Army Unit, undated, Record Group 319, National Archives, Washington DC.
- 7 ORO Study, 35.
- 8 *Do* means island in Hangul (Korean). Thus Cho-do is Cho Island.
- 9 ORO Study, 35. Figures are based on the disposition of partisan units in June 1952.
- 10 Alex R. Lizardo, 8240th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 22 February 2010, History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 11 Alex R. Lizardo, 8240th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 9 March 2010, History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 12 Richard M. Ripley, 8240th AU, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 14 August 2007, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 13 ORO Study, 31.
- 14 Ripley interview. 14 August 2007.
- 15 Ripley interview. 14 August 2007.
- 16 ORO Study, pg 77.
- 17 Paddock, The 8240th Army Unit, *Special Forces: The First Fifty Years* (Tampa FL, Faircount LLC, 2002), 85.
- 18 Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins*, (Lawrence, KS, University Press of Kansas, 2002) 106. United Nations Partisan Forces Korea was another organization prone to name changes. It is often referred to as the United Nations Partisan Infantry Korea (UNPIK).
- 19 ORO Study, 77.
- 20 Eugene G. Piasecki, “Smoke Bomb Hill: Birth of the Psywar Center, Part I,” *Veritas: The Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 7, No. 1, 2011, 94-102.
- 21 ORO Study, 77.
- 22 Richard M. Ripley, 8240th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Michael Krivdo and Mr. Eugene Piasecki, 31 January 2013, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 23 A comprehensive list of the 10th Special Forces Group personnel who deployed to Germany and Korea in 1953 compiled from the original orders is contained in *Special Forces: The First Fifty Years* (Tampa FL, Faircount LLC, 2002), 94-101.



- 24 Charles W. Norton, 8240th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 9 April 2004, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 25 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 26 Rueben L. Mooradian, 8240th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 21 November 2005, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 27 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 28 Robert W. Downey, 8240th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 24 March 2011, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC. **By this time in the war, the Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities – Korea (CCRAK), an FEC staff section was responsible for logistical support to the guerrilla units.**
- 29 Downey interview, 24 March 2011. **Downey would later serve in Special Forces with the 77<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group.**
- 30 Myron J. Layton, 8240th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 21 November 2011, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 31 Layton interview, 21 November 2011.
- 32 **FEC stopped sending American or British soldiers on deep airborne insertions after the failure of Operations SPITFIRE and VIRGINIA ONE. After the deaths of 1LT Castro and CPT Payne, the number of raids on the mainland had dropped off precipitously as the signing of the Armistice approached.** ORO Study, 52-53, 62-64 and 74-76.
- 33 Eugene G. Piasecki, "TLO: Line-Crosses, Special Forces, and the 'Forgotten War,'" *Veritas: the Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Vol 8, No. 2, 2012, 38-48.
- 34 Earl L. Thieme, 8007th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Richard Kiper, 11 August 2003, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 35 Earl L. Thieme, 8007th Army Unit, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 21 November 2005, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 36 Sam C. Sarkesian, 8007/8112th AU, interview by Dr. Richard Kiper, 8 October 2003, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC. **In Sarkesian's recollection there was no Team #2. 8007th AU worked for the FEC G-2.**
- 37 Sarkesian interview, 8 October 2003.
- 38 Mooradian interview, 21 November 2005.
- 39 Sarkesian interview, 8 October 2003.
- 40 Thieme interview, 11 August 2003.
- 41 Thieme interview, 11 August 2003.
- 42 Thieme interview, 21 November 2005.
- 43 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 44 Ripley interview, 31 January 2013.
- 45 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 46 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 47 Maurice H. Price, 8240th AU, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 12 December 2012, USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 48 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 49 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 50 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 51 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 52 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 53 Price interview, 12 December 2012.
- 54 Norton interview, 9 April 2004.
- 55 Department of the Army, FM 31-21, *Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare*, October 1951, copy in USASOC History Support Center, Fort Bragg, NC. **The principal author of FM-31-21 was LTC Russell W. Volckmann who led the Philippine guerrillas on northern Luzon in World War II. Volckmann visited with COL John H. McGee in Korea in late 1950 and incorporated McGee's assessment of the guerrilla situation in Korea into the field manual.**

LST 546 loading guerrillas on Kanghwha-do for the movement to Cheju-do for demobilization. LTs Charlie Norton and Maurice Price accompanied the demobilizing guerrillas. They were the only Caucasians on the vessel which had a contracted Japanese crew.







# GIA

## Paramilitary Operations

Korea, 1950-1951

by Charles H. Briscoe



During the Korean War, all American military services, United Nations (UN) forces, Korean military and civilian elements, and a fledgling Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) conducted special operations. To compound the surprise of North Korea's invasion of South Korea on 25 June 1950, neither General (GEN) Douglas A. MacArthur, his Far East Command (FEC), nor the CIA had developed strategic or tactical special warfare plans for the peninsula. Roles in behind-the-lines operations had not been defined by the military or the Agency.<sup>1</sup> The only special warfare asset in Japan when war broke out was an Underwater Demolition Team (UDT-3) detachment. On temporary duty (TDY) from Coronado, CA, they were mapping the Japanese warships sunk off the beaches after WWII.<sup>2</sup>

General MacArthur had traditionally 'stonewalled' civilian agencies seeking to conduct paramilitary or

intelligence operations in his theater. During World War II, he kept the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) out of the South West Pacific Area (SWPA). MacArthur did not want the CIA setting up shop in Korea, though the Agency had been running agents in Communist China and North Korea since 1947. And, the CIA shared considerable regional intelligence with FEC.<sup>3</sup> Faced with the EUSA and depleted Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) divisions huddled in a loose defensive perimeter around Pusan by late summer in 1950, the FEC commander had reluctantly agreed to accept George E. Aurell as the CIA Special Operations (OSO) chief. The former consul of Yokohama, born and raised in Kobe, Japan, was a SWPA veteran (Nisei team chief). This endeared him to MacArthur's 'Bataan Gang.' Multi-lingual Hans V. Tofte, an OSS Europe veteran, was chief of OPC (Office of Policy Coordination) in Japan.<sup>4</sup> In this article CIA activities are untangled from the military special operations lore of the Korean War.

There are several purposes for this article. First it will correct (based on additional information), expand, and clarify "Soldier-Sailors in Korea: JACK Maritime Operations" published in 2006. Second, it will separate CIA covert and clandestine land and maritime operations (tactical and strategic) from the other special activities during the war. Third, it will show that a fluid combat situation permitted deep behind-the-lines operations in 1950-1951. And lastly, it will reveal the critical roles of military officers and sergeants detailed to the CIA.<sup>5</sup>

USMC and Navy UDT officers, seamen, and a CIA civilian case officer explain early paramilitary operations in Korea. The success of Navy-supported UDT/Marine demolition raids against coastal railways in August 1950 caused the Agency to emulate them. The early mission planning and preparation for paramilitary operations in



Camp McGill temporarily housed the Eighth U.S. Army infantry units undergoing amphibious training before Korea.

UDT-1 and UDT-3 frogmen train at Naga Beach near Camp McGill, Japan, 1950.





Korea was done in Japan. While this article focuses on the first year of conflict, an understanding of the prewar intelligence situation in Korea is critical.

To begin, human intelligence (HUMINT) assets in South Korea were limited. With the exception of the small 971<sup>st</sup> Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) detachment in Seoul, Far East Command had no covert intelligence collection capability in Korea. Despite 971<sup>st</sup> CIC reports that North Korean divisions were integral to the Lee Hong-won Branch, 8th Chinese Route Army in Manchuria, Major General (MG) Charles A. Willoughby, the FEC G-2, ignored the implications.<sup>6</sup>

Having reluctantly allowed the CIA to establish a post in Japan in the fall of 1950, General MacArthur kept the Agency 'under close observation' until its second director, retired GEN Walter Bedell 'Beetle' Smith, came to Tokyo. General Dwight D. Eisenhower's former chief of staff in Tunisia, Italy, and Europe and ex-ambassador to Russia visited Japan and Korea in mid-January 1951 with the blessing of a frustrated President Harry S. Truman.<sup>7</sup> After General MacArthur had downplayed the possibility of Chinese intervention, they had attacked *en masse*, forcing hasty withdrawals beyond Seoul. In the process two American infantry divisions were decimated. And, contrary to U.S. national policy, GEN MacArthur had publicly advocated using nuclear weapons.

Despite that schism Smith and MacArthur reached an accord in Tokyo; FEC would not interfere with Agency activities in-theater as long as the CIA established an escape and evasion (E&E) network to recover downed UN airmen. Before coming to Japan, the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), 'Beetle' Smith, had told the Army and Joint Chiefs of Staff that the Agency would provide tactical intelligence to FEC and EUSA for the duration of hostilities.<sup>8</sup> In return, the CIA was given freedom of action in Korea. Unlike FEC, that myopically focused on the peninsula war, the Agency directed global strategic intelligence missions against the Soviet Union and Red China.<sup>9</sup> Regardless, MG Willoughby kept close tabs on the CIA.<sup>10</sup>

The Agency had done little to define its behind-the-lines operations anywhere.<sup>11</sup> And, the U.S. military planners had not considered the use of friendly guerrillas against Communist flanks until early 1951. Desperate after being pushed out of Seoul again, guerrilla warfare (GW) offered the means to destabilize enemy rear areas and to relieve pressure on frontline UN units.<sup>12</sup> EUSA staff officers promoted friendly guerrillas as a low cost force multiplier while the CIA developed its paramilitary programs in Japan.<sup>13</sup>

Danish-American Hans Tofte and his deputy, Colwell E. Beers, established a large CIA training and support facility (fifty acres) on Atsugi Air Force Base, a former Japanese Navy air station forty-seven miles south of Tokyo. His OPC (covert) operations were covered as the Far East Air Forces Technical Analysis Group (FEAF/TAG). George Aurell's OSO intelligence activities (collection and espionage), directed from Yokosuka Naval Base (near Yokohama) by his deputy, OSS China veteran William



In mid-January 1951 (R) CIA Director Walter B. Smith (far right) conferred with (C) LTG Matthew B. Ridgway, new EUSA commander, and (L) MG Charles A. Willoughby, FEC G-2 in Korea.

E. Duggan, were accomplished under the cover of the Department of Army Liaison Detachment (DA/LD).<sup>14</sup> The OSO chief had an office in the *Dai Ichi* building (GEN MacArthur's FEC headquarters) next to Colonel (COL) Washington M. Ives, Jr., the administrative officer for MG Willoughby. But, Aurell was not Tofte's superior; it was a cooperative relationship.<sup>15</sup>

OPC and OSO were separate, distinct entities overseen by their respective Far Eastern Desk chiefs in Washington. While generalities about missions were shared between Agency section chiefs, as a rule they compartmented specific activities. The OSO focused on strategic intelligence collection and espionage while OPC operations were largely paramilitary.<sup>16</sup>

The CIA, charged with establishing an E&E overland corridor across North Korea for downed fliers, created a maritime 'safety net' with contracted native smuggling/fishing fleets on each coast extending north to the Yalu River. Tofte needed military trainers with E&E expertise. When WWII veteran USMC Major (MAJ) Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer (U.S. Naval Group China), an Agency detailee, arrived from Taiwan, Tofte grabbed him to be his paramilitary operations chief. Kramer's first mission was to organize a multi-service planning effort to fulfill the expectations of the air leadership in Naval Forces Far East (NAVFE) and FEAF.<sup>17</sup>

The resultant E&E plan satisfied the Air Force and Navy commanders because Tofte had provided very specific guidance. An island terminus off each coast would connect a guerrilla-operated E&E 'rat line' spanning the peninsula just below 'MiG Alley' along the Chinese-North Korean border. CIA command and control (C&C) teams on these two islands were to coordinate activities and arrange support via radio. Guerrilla base camps every twenty to twenty-five miles in the E&E corridor would protect the 'rat line.' In lieu of having airmen carry 'blood chits' (promissory notes), Tofte arranged to provide small gold bars for survival kits. Fishing fleets that smuggled contraband to the north were to be contracted to patrol both coasts and periodically check offshore islands for stranded UN flyers. In return Tofte could de-brief rescued





## USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer

was a WWII veteran of Guadalcanal and U.S. Naval Group China.

Vincent R. Kramer was born 31 May 1918 in Paterson, New Jersey. From Bordentown Military Institute he received a football scholarship to Rutgers University. Following graduation in 1941, Kramer attended the USMC Officers Candidate School and was commissioned as a reserve second lieutenant (2LT). Wounded at Guadalcanal, LT Kramer was later assigned to the U.S. Naval Group China. After WWII MAJ Kramer volunteered for a detail with the fledgling CIA and was assigned to Taiwan. He was awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism on several CIA operations behind enemy lines in 1951.<sup>18</sup>

airmen to improve the E&E system.<sup>19</sup> It was up to MAJ 'Dutch' Kramer to turn the plan into reality.

The resourceful Marine went to Korea to recruit U.S. military veterans with special operations experience working with paramilitaries. With the dissolution of the OSS after WWII, most American military operatives returned to their parent services or civilian life. The CIA, like the Ranger Infantry Companies (Airborne) RICA formed for combat in Korea, and the Army's new Special Forces, recruited OSS, Ranger battalion, Marauder, and paratroop veterans as well as USMC Para-Marines and Raiders, and Navy UDT for Agency 'details.' An 'old boy' network of former associates and personal connections was used to identify military personnel.<sup>20</sup> Kramer found wounded EUSA Rangers in hospitals and visited newly arrived companies of Rangers.<sup>21</sup> He also sought out old war buddies and UDT personnel while Tofte tackled the Koreans.

The multi-lingual Tofte was "a really brilliant, suave and sociable guy with an extensive Asian background," recalled MAJ John K. Singlaub (JACK Chief of Staff). He worked ROKA connections to find young officers interested in special warfare.<sup>22</sup> This produced Captain (CPT) Han Chul-min, a veteran intelligence officer born and raised in North Korea. Tofte enlisted him to recruit personnel for guerrilla operations and to arrange meetings with civilian maritime 'entrepreneurs'—fishermen/smugglers that regularly worked the northern coasts.

CPT Han Chul-min screened North Korean refugees and enemy deserters kept in separate POW camps in



CPT Tofte, WWII, OSS Maritime Unit, Yugoslavia, was the CIA OPC chief in Japan.

Pusan for volunteers willing to be intelligence agents, guerrillas, and radiomen. Out-of-work *Korea Telegraph Company* radio and telegraph operators (some wanting to avoid ROKA conscription) were prime targets.<sup>23</sup> Tofte believed that "the refugees were down-in-the-mouth, bored with nothing to do. Joining the guerrillas would give them a chance to get out, to eat three meals a day, to have something to do."<sup>24</sup> As the numbers grew, secure training sites had to be established for the new recruits.

The Agency facility on Atsugi AFB was ten miles from Camp Chigasaki near the FEC amphibious training base (Camp McGill) on Sagami Bay.<sup>25</sup> There, for two weeks, CPT Han Chul-min and his cadre would be taught

"I arrived in Japan on Christmas Day, 1950, after six weeks of training—yes, six weeks of a course that could have been titled, 'How to Be a Spy in Occupied France.' I was officially a 'Case Officer/Paramilitary GS-5.' I was one of eight GS-5s at the same level of innocence sent to do whatever we could. None of us had any significant military experience, but the Agency had no one better at the time,"

— John E. Cremeans, Jr.



After his Korean service CIA civilian John E. Cremeans, Jr. was commissioned in the U.S. Air Force Reserve as a first lieutenant.



small unit infantry tactics, guerrilla warfare operations, intelligence collection, E&E rat line security, and radio communications. Tofte and Kramer with the help of six 'press-ganged' CIA junior case officers trained the guerrilla cadre.<sup>26</sup>

"I arrived in Japan on Christmas Day, 1950, after six weeks of training—yes, six weeks of a course that could have been titled, 'How to Be a Spy in Occupied France.' I was officially a 'Case Officer/Paramilitary GS-5.' I was one of eight GS-5s at the same level of innocence sent to do whatever we could. None of us had any significant military experience, but the Agency had no one better at the time," commented John E. Cremeans, Jr.<sup>27</sup> MAJ Kramer selected him to help with the guerrilla cadre training.

After the Koreans completed training they were flown back to Pusan where a refurbished Japanese military camp on Yong-do awaited. The island, connected by a causeway that edged Pusan harbor, was easily secured. The bay beaches could support small boat training. And, the camp was near the refugee camps and supply depots.

CPT Han Chul-min and his cadre got the recruits to Yong-do where they were clothed, equipped, and organized into groups to learn basic soldiering and receive orientations on a variety of weapons. The physically fit who satisfactorily

completed the mini-basic training were formed into platoons. These groups were given marksmanship instruction, taught guerrilla tactics, trained in small rubber boat insertions, and coached on how to survive as E&E 'rat line' guides to the island terminals.<sup>28</sup> As the volunteers grew into the hundreds MAJ Kramer pulled in U.S. military veterans to help with training.

'Schmoozing' at the various headquarters and officers' clubs in Japan and Korea enabled the Marine major to recruit some of those who had conducted special warfare missions at the behest of GEN MacArthur.<sup>29</sup> The FEC commander had been pressing the service headquarters in Tokyo "to conduct harassing and demolition raids against selected North Korean military objectives and execute deceptive operations in Korean coastal areas." He wanted to disrupt enemy lines of communication and supply and reduce pressure on Pusan.<sup>30</sup>

Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, Commander, NAVFE, proposed to organize small *ad hoc* amphibious raiding parties to harass the enemy by attacking coastal supply lines. The nucleus of the raiders would come from the UDT-3 detachment in Japan. But, assigning UDT missions beyond the breaker line was a major naval employment change. Ground combat training was needed.<sup>31</sup> "These



Thirty-six foot LCPRs from the USS Begor (APD-127) were used to provide amphibious orientations to the CIA guerrilla trainees on the beaches of Yong-do in Pusan harbor.



The ground school phase of airborne training was given to Special Mission Group (SMG) personnel at Yong-do by SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella in the spring of 1951.

## Yong-do Training



A former Japanese military camp on Yong-do at the mouth of Pusan harbor was refurbished for CIA guerrilla and SMG training.





## LTJG George C. Atcheson, III, UDT-3

George C. Atcheson, III was born in Peking, China, 16 April 1923. His father, a WWI Army veteran, had joined the Foreign Service in 1920. The Atcheson family was among the evacuees aboard the USS *Panay* (PR-5) river gunboat on 12 December 1937 when Japanese aircraft attacked and sank it in the Yangtze River. The Atchesons survived. After a short assignment on the Far Eastern Desk at the State Department, his Chinese-speaking father returned to Chungking as Chargé d'Affaires for the duration of WWII. The younger Atcheson attended the University of California, Berkeley before joining the U.S. Navy. Subsequent officer training led to a reserve commission and sea duty aboard a destroyer escort. Ensign Atcheson was at the Philadelphia Naval Yard when his father, the Chairman of the Four Power Allied Council for Japan and Political Advisor (POLAD) to General Douglas A. MacArthur, FEC, was lost in an airplane crash on 18 August 1947. Ensign Atcheson subsequently volunteered for Underwater Demolition Team training in 1948 and was assigned to UDT-3. He took a nine-man detachment to Japan in March 1950 to conduct beach surveys and mark the Japanese military vessels sunk offshore at the end of WWII. Lieutenant junior grade (LTJG) Atcheson was awarded the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry in action on 25 January 1952 while leading a CIA raiding party that eliminated a North Korean security patrol, derailed a locomotive, and destroyed a railroad bridge.<sup>33</sup>



Unofficial UDT 'Frog' patch

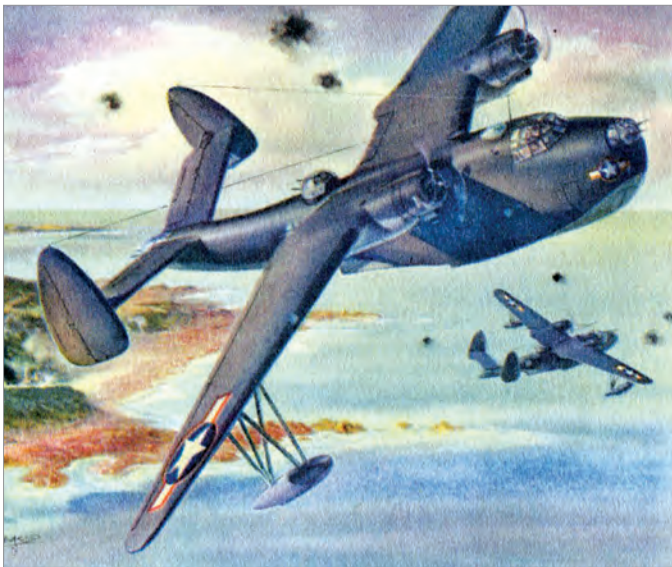


Illustration of PBM-5 Mariner flying boats.

were desperate times and every command was ready to try anything," said UDT-3 Lieutenant junior grade (LTJG) George C. Atcheson, III. On 6 August 1950, NAVFE pulled his detachment off a beach survey in Japan and tasked it to destroy a railroad bridge on the southern coast near Yosü.<sup>32</sup> The seaport had three rail bridges and a tunnel within three hundred yards of the ocean. Enthusiasm was insufficient to accomplish this raiding mission forty-five miles behind North Korean lines.

"A PBM-5 *Mariner* flying boat flew us to Sasebo. The *Diachenko* (APD-123) was weighing anchor as we scrambled aboard from the shuttle boat. Before we could settle in, a gunner's mate passed out M1928A1 Thompson sub-machineguns [SMG]. Most of us had not fired a weapon

since boot camp. Our assigned weapon was a diver's knife. We got a thorough class in assembly, disassembly, and maintenance before spending a few hours on the fantail shooting at inflatable marker buoys," recalled Seaman First Class Phillip E. Carrico.<sup>34</sup>

"The plan was to have an LCVP [Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel] 'Higgins Boat,' carry us, our ten-man rubber boat [RB-10], and the explosives within two hundred yards of the beach. LT Atcheson and Boatswain's Mate [BM] Warren 'Peekskill' Foley were to be the scout swimmers. Just beyond the breakers, the two scouts slipped into the water with their SMGs. Atcheson, who was carrying a .45 automatic, tossed his SMG back into the boat while Foley struggled to shore with his. They discovered that the selected landing site was five yards of rocky 'beach' abutting a cliff-like railroad embankment twenty-five feet high," said Carrico.<sup>35</sup>

"Foley came back for us while LT Atcheson went looking for a way to get atop the embankment. There was just enough 'beach' to get the boat ashore and for us to hide in the shadows. With our backs pressed against the cliff we saw that the LCVP and the *Diachenko* were silhouetted on the water by the full moon. About that time an enemy patrol, riding a railroad handcar, came rattling out of the tunnel to investigate. We heard explosions and Foley took off, charging towards the tunnel to help the lieutenant. As he retreated back down the tracks, Atcheson fired at Foley thinking he was a 'gook' running towards him. Fortunately, he missed," chuckled Carrico.<sup>36</sup>

"The North Koreans, however, were better shots and hit Foley twice [leg and hand] before he tumbled off the embankment. Atcheson, who, by then, was back and above our hiding spot, leaned over the edge of the embankment to whisper something. That's when Seaman Austin cut



loose on this suspected 'gook' with his Thompson. After getting his cap shot off by his own man, the lieutenant yelled at us to get Foley. We were compromised and had to get out of there quick. The guys manhandled Foley into the RB-10, laying him on top of the demolition packs. Then, we started paddling like madmen to reach the LCVP. That first mission was a bust, but we learned a lot. 'Ole 'Peekskill' Foley was the first U.S. Navy casualty of the war," recounted Seaman Carrico. "He got a Silver Star and a Purple Heart."<sup>37</sup> The lack of success at Yosu did not deter the admirals.

Within days NAVFE had organized a stronger raiding party and put it aboard the USS *Horace A. Bass* (APD-124). The *ad hoc* force, heading north along the East coast, was led by Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) D.F. 'Kelly' Welch, UDT-1. It consisted of twenty-five UDT seamen and sixteen Marines: Welch's advance party, LT Atcheson's detachment (UDT-3), and a USMC security element led by MAJ Edward P. Dupras, Jr., a WWII Marine Raider and U.S. Naval Group China veteran. Three of their five demolitions raids against bridges were successful.<sup>39</sup> In contrast, attempts to destroy railroad tunnels with piles of 60 lb. TNT satchels proved to be exercises in futility, though the explosion at night was "a sight to behold" according to LTJG K.J. Christoph, UDT-1. The tunnels remained intact even when a North Korean ammunition train hiding inside added to the explosive power. "It simply blew a huge fart out both ends," clarified LTJG George Atcheson, UDT-3.<sup>40</sup>

Luck ran out for the Navy-Marine raiding group when it attempted to reconnoiter the beaches near Kunsan. The North Koreans were alert and waiting. With two wounded and several bullet-riddled RBs, the UDT took cover in the water and withdrew. LT Atcheson was among the RB-10 crew that returned to rescue the Marine security detail left behind, none of whom could swim.<sup>41</sup> When the *ad hoc* NAVFE raiding force returned to Japan, Atcheson became 'borrowed help' to MAJ Kramer. Capitalizing on

the UDT-Marine successes, he wanted Atcheson to give small boat training to CPT Han Chul-min and the Korean guerrilla leaders.<sup>42</sup>

Everything began falling into place for training guerrillas in March 1951. MAJ Kramer took two of the junior case officers, John E. Cremeans and Charles Gillis, to Yong-do to handle the administration and logistics; from food to uniforms, armament, ammunition, and transportation. A total of seven Americans (military and civilians) supported the BLOSSOM project (E&E corridor). They taught advanced technical skills—marksmanship, demolitions, first aid, small boat operations, crew-served weaponry, and basic parachuting. An old friend of Kramer, USMC First Lieutenant (1LT) Thomas L. Curtis, joined LTJG Atcheson on Yong-do. LT Curtis was a 'mustang' officer (enlisted to warrant to battlefield commission) who was a highly decorated veteran of the Atlantic Fleet Scout-Observer Group and OSS in Greece and China.<sup>43</sup>

Between training classes MAJ Kramer and LT Atcheson arranged amphibious support with NAVFE. As air and/or naval delivery assets became available, guerrilla recruits were periodically pulled out of training to fill teams being inserted into North Korea to establish E&E basecamps.<sup>44</sup> The USS *Begor* (APD-127), a Crosley-class high-speed transport destroyer, designed to carry UDT and Marine Raiders behind enemy lines for reconnaissance and demolition missions in WWII, was the ideal ship for these missions.

By April 1951, the guerrillas were practicing landings on the beaches of Yong-do using 36-foot LCPR and rubber boats from the *Begor*. Hans Tofte filmed these daylight exercises. After MAJ Kramer and LT Atcheson were satisfied with the proficiency of the guerrilla recruits, three twenty-five man groups re-embarked the APD and left for Yo-do at the mouth of Wonsan harbor. Under cover of darkness one element was inserted south of Wonsan and the others were put ashore at two different beaches considerably north of the seaport. The landing sites, close



L to R: BM Warren Foley, SM Phillip E. Carrico, and SM B. Johnson, UDT-3, pose with Thompson sub-machineguns aboard the USS *Diachenko* (APD-123) before the first raid.



UDT-3 detachment minus BM Warren Foley after the 25 June 1950 raid. Standing, L to R: Jones, Akerson, Johnson, Nelson, Carrico; Kneeling L to R: McCormick, Austin, LT Atcheson. Note frayed bill on Atcheson's utility cap from Austin's sub-machinegun burst.





## Seaman First Class Phillip E. Carrico, UDT-3

Born 6 September 1929 in Silsbee, Texas, the first son and second of five children of an auto mechanic and housewife/shipyard worker, Phillip Elwin Carrico grew up in the Depression. At Daisetta High School, the tough, hard scrabble Carrico lettered in football, basketball, and track all three years while working part time. After graduation in 1948, the former All District linebacker joined the Navy with a friend. 'Boot Camp' at the Naval Training Center (NTC), San Diego, California, followed. Seaman (SM) Carrico was waiting for assignment at the Pacific Fleet Amphibious Base in August 1948 when an officer asked for volunteers to attend basic underwater demolition training. With no responses, he asked, 'Who can swim?' Carrico was among fifteen who raised their hands, saying that they could.

On the Coronado Silver Strand (beach), clad in Navy swim trunks the 'volunteer' seamen were handed a Mae West life vest by the coxswain of an LCV(P) (Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel). When the UDT WWII Quonset huts on shore became the size of ants, the boat idled. Then, the coxswain told the volunteers to jump in, pointed towards the beach, and powered off. About two hours later Carrico stumbled out of the surf several miles south of the Quonsets, one of six who chose to swim ashore. As the exhausted Texan rode away in a Jeep, he saw yellow Mae West-supported sailors still bobbing far out at sea. The next day SM Carrico joined fifty other UDT candidates to start four weeks of intense training that culminated in a 'Hell Week.'<sup>38</sup>

to heavily forested coastal areas, were familiar to the North Korean guerrillas. These three advance elements were the nucleus for establishing E&E rally point camps in the interior.<sup>45</sup> UDT-3 aboard the *Begor* furnished scout swimmers and RB-10 coxswains because the guerrillas were carrying large quantities of supplies with them.<sup>46</sup>

The northernmost group, code-named CLOWN, called themselves the 'White Tigers.' They had one man killed on the way to their destination. Being deep in enemy territory meant that these elements received resupplies of food, ammunition, and radio batteries by air. More than two hundred guerrillas were dropped near the initial camps during the summer of 1951 to replace casualties and to create more inland E&E rally points. Inaccurate airdrops caused delays as the elements regrouped; leading to inadvertent enemy contacts, teams wandering lost for days, and long foot marches to base camps for the twenty-man reinforcement teams.<sup>47</sup> Because UN aircrew recovery business was slow, CLOWN elements began collecting intelligence from sympathetic locals to attack police stations and security forces. Success prompted larger and more daring missions to include destroying bridges with explosives. The more they did, the more the irritated enemy sought to eradicate the 'wild pigs.'<sup>48</sup>

A 'White Tiger' radio report that a large meeting of North Korean and Chinese military and Communist Party leaders was being held in Kapsan on 29 October 1951 to coordinate guerrilla eradication efforts put the guerrillas at great risk. But, the target was too lucrative for FEC to ignore. A large naval air attack was launched against industrial targets in Sokhyon, thirty-five miles southeast the day before the scheduled meeting. This decoy strike was to cover the major low-level attack on the Kapsan compound the next day. Unbeknownst to the Navy AD-4 *Skyraider* and F4-U *Corsair* pilots, the 'White Tigers,' decided to attack the local police station just before the scheduled TOT (time on target).<sup>49</sup>

Both missions were very successful. More than 44,000 pounds of ordnance (250, 500 and 1,000 pound bombs,

aerial rockets, and machineguns) systematically flattened the four-acre complex. One wall was standing an hour later; only one bomb missed its target. The Navy pilots, all awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses, were condemned as the 'Butchers of Kapsan' in *Radio P'yongyang* broadcasts. While the 'White Tigers' freed fifteen young anti-Communists held captive by the police and suffered light losses, their involvement prompted extreme retribution.<sup>50</sup>

The attack was the 'high water mark' for the 'White Tigers.' Regular airdrops of supplies had pinpointed the guerrilla camps. Local informants were revealed, rounded up, tortured for specifics, and then executed by the Communists. An extremely harsh winter with heavy snowfalls in the mountains compounded the situation. Foot movement was hampered as North Korean security forces blocked avenues of escape. The groups split into small elements to break out and radio contact was lost. But, tracking the escapees in deep snow was relatively simple. CLOWN ('White Tigers'), the key to maintaining the Agency E&E corridor, was a historical footnote by the end of February 1952.<sup>51</sup> Still tasked with E&E despite the military stalemate and Armistice overtures, Hans Tofte continued to insert intelligence agents and guerrilla elements behind the lines.

By then, the North Korean government had reestablished tight population controls, linked military and home defense forces with communications, and had mandated night 'guard duty' by local citizenry. The peasants were already being tasked to repair roads, bridges, and railroads damaged by air and commando attacks. Constant coastal bombardment by the UN blockade ships destroyed any lingering local interest in supporting guerrilla elements.<sup>52</sup> Internal security got tighter as the main line of resistance (MLR) between conventional forces became static.<sup>53</sup>

Though the CIA and EUSA infiltrated thousands of agents into North Korea to organize resistance and conduct guerrilla operations, success was nearly zero—whether they parachuted in, transferred to local boats



offshore, or simply walked in overland.<sup>54</sup> Both the Army and the Agency did much better collecting intelligence. Frustrated by the E&E guerrilla team failures to maintain an overland E&E corridor, Hans Tofte and MAJ 'Dutch' Kramer switched gears to address a strategic weapon that was plaguing UN naval forces.

The Russian Navy at Vladivostok had sent military advisors to North Korea to supervise the arming and installation of floating mine fields to barricade Wonsan, Hungnam, and Chinnamp'o harbors and to harass UN naval ships blockading the peninsula. *Sampans*, loaded with mines on the shores of the Yalu River, delivered them nightly. With heavy timbers laid across the elevated stern of a *sampan*, four Russian M-26 contact mines could be delivered.<sup>67</sup> Disruption of Communist coastal mining operations had strategic as well as tactical implications. After MAJ Kramer and Tofte discussed the feasibility with UDT LT Atcheson, they sought out daring U.S. Navy small boatmen and Army Ranger volunteers from NAVFE and FEC for a special mission.<sup>68</sup>

When an ancient South Korean patrol boat delivered five Rangers to the USS *Perkins* (DDR-877) in the late fall 1950, little did Boatswain's Mate (BM) William C. Warwick, Jr. realize that he would 'captain' their boat for more than seven months. The Tsingtao/Shanghai Navy rescue mission (evacuating American citizens as the Red Army drove the Nationalists from the mainland in May 1949) veteran was reputed to be the best motorized whaleboat (MWB) coxswain in the Pacific fleet.<sup>69</sup>

BM Warwick 'captained' a wooden hull, twenty-six foot MWB (Mark 10 version) specially outfitted with a 'hopped up' 120 horsepower Gray Marine diesel engine equipped with muffled exhaust. Red-lit night navigation equipment was installed. The U.S. Navy provided transportation for the CIA raiders; first, a 'piggy back' ride aboard a blockade ship, and then a 'stealth' coastline insertion after a seaside underway launch of the MWB. Operating in North Korea, BMs Warwick and Marvin Curry and Seaman Sam Hill were responsible for camouflaging and guarding the MWB among the rocks along the coast. The seamen formed a perimeter defense and then 'hunkered down' to wait for the

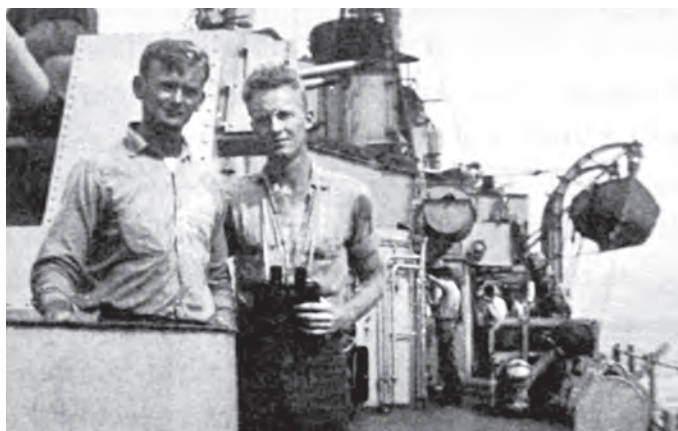
Rangers to return. After the raids, the seamen transported the Rangers back to base by 'leap frogging' along the coast at night, evading the enemy, and trying to avoid 'triggering' a floating Russian mine.<sup>70</sup>

The reality was that only the derailment of trains inside tunnels created sufficient chaos and wreckage to close major sections of the Hungnam-Kojo-Yangyang line for long periods.<sup>71</sup> Navy UDT-3 and UDT-1 detachments had concentrated their raids on coastal trains, rail lines, bridges, and tunnels since the summer of 1950. Trains moving at night and tunnels were very difficult targets that required a lot of man-carried explosives. And, the enemy patrolled these vital supply lines in force.<sup>72</sup> Regarding these as simple harassment missions, the CIA was eager to attack the source of the sea mine problem.

The demolition raids against the coastal railway were to 'gear up' the CIA team for its most ambitious and significant tasking—to attack the North Korean mine storage/loading facilities. Though the targets were more than two hundred miles from Nan-do, the Agency team chose not to risk alerting the enemy with a U.S. Navy vessel at the mouth of



Navy Seaman (SM) Marvin Curry, a full-blooded Seneca (Snipe Clan), Cattaraugus Territory, New York, spent two years detailed to the CIA. He assisted LTJG George Atcheson with small boat training and was part of Warwick's MWB crew during the Agency attacks on Soviet sea mine distribution sites as far north as the Vladivostok harbor light tower.



The MWB engineer with BM William C. Warwick, Jr. (left) was Seaman (SM) Samuel Hill (right). The two sailors are aboard the USS *Perkins* (DDR-877). The third MWB crew member was SM Marvin Curry.



Cutting rail and rubbing the entrances of railroad tunnels were UDT nuisance targets. Collapsing railroad bridges disrupted traffic for weeks.



# *The* NAVAL NEMESIS *in Korea*

*"We have lost control of the seas to a nation without a Navy, using pre-World War I weapons, laid by vessels that were utilized at the time of the birth of Christ."* — Rear Admiral (RADM) Allan E. 'Hoke' Smith

Though the atomic bomb gave America omnipotence in the immediate post-WWII era, only naval fleets carrying Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU) could project U.S. military power in a few days. Establishing a peninsular naval blockade contained the North Korean invasion to the land. This action gave the United Nations time to react to the aggression. Despite naval and air superiority, sea minefields balanced the strategic battlefield.<sup>55</sup>

Mines denied access to harbors, blocked Marine amphibious assaults, and harassed blockade ships. Clearing minefields covered by land-based artillery (Soviet military doctrine) and detecting untethered floating mines were high stress, manpower intensive operations. It did not help that the world's most powerful Navy had mothballed its minesweeping fleets after WWII.

Russian military historians admitted that North Korea, with Soviet naval help, managed to emplace thousands of mines to protect the ports of Wonsan (3,000 alone), Hungnam, and Chinnamp'o. "These mine fields significantly reduced the activities of the American Navy," stated Soviet MG V.A. Zolotarev.<sup>56</sup> The USS *Brush* (DD-745) had its hull torn open mid-ship and its keel broken by a mine. Thirteen sailors were killed, thirty-one wounded, and it was off station almost a year. Two weeks after Incho'n, the USS *Mansfield* (DD-728) had twenty-seven wounded when its bow was severed by a mine. Seaman George Henderson said: "You could drive a city bus through the hole in her keel."<sup>57</sup> A year later it returned to the blockade.

Mines sank three minesweepers, the USS *Magpie* (AMS-25) on 1 October 1950 and the USS *Pirate* (AM-275) and USS *Pledge* (AM-277) on 12 October 1950 in Wonsan harbor. Twenty-one seamen were lost.<sup>58</sup>

Sea mines were very effective and truly insidious weapons. The final tally for sea mine losses/damages was five severely damaged U.S. destroyers [add the USS *Walke* (DD-723) on 12 June 1951, the USS *Ernest G. Small* (DD-838) on 7 October 1951, and the USS *Barton* (DD-722) on 16 September 1952. The five vessels had nine killed and eighteen wounded. Seven minesweepers were sunk [add the USS *Partridge* (AMS-31) to total four USN, one ROK Navy, and two Japanese Defense Forces]. A Seventh Fleet ocean tug, USS *Sarsi* (ATF-111) was sunk on 27 August 1952 off Hungnam. Four were killed and four wounded. Several Korean merchant vessels were also lost to mines.<sup>59</sup>

Rear Admiral (RADM) Allan E. 'Hoke' Smith, TF Advance Force 95 at Wonsan, cabled Washington: "We have lost control of the seas to a nation without a Navy, using pre-World War I weapons, laid by vessels that were utilized at the time of the birth of Christ."<sup>60</sup> Easy to emplace sea mines were railroaded south and laid at night by *sampans*, the ubiquitous small fishing boats that plied the coasts and inland waterways of Asia. The minefields caused a 250-ship amphibious task force with 50,000 Marines and soldiers aboard to 'yo-yo' up and down Korea's East coast for two weeks as NAVFE waited for Wonsan

Depiction of the USS *Pirate* (AM 275) sinking at Wonsan just before the USS *Pledge* (AM 277) in background hits a mine after being bracketed by North Korean shore batteries.







The USS *Mansfield* sustained significant damage two weeks after Inch on. 27 crewmembers were injured when the bow was severed by a mine.



USS *Ernest G. Small*, DD 838, sails to Kobe, Japan, in reverse after losing its bow to a sea mine.



The ubiquitous wooden, man and sail powered *sampan* has plied coastal and inland waters of Asia for centuries for fishing and carrying trade goods and contraband.



Daily sweeping was done to clear hundreds of MKB mines laid before the US arrival at Wonsan. Shown here is an MSB 5 “Destruction Boat” with a captured 1,200 lb Russian MKB mine, April 1952.

harbor to be cleared. During daylight Navy flying boats (Martin PBM-5 *Marlins*), ship-based helicopters, minesweepers and UDT swimmer teams worked non-stop. Aircraft failed to detonate mines with 1,000-pound bombs and depth charges.<sup>61</sup>

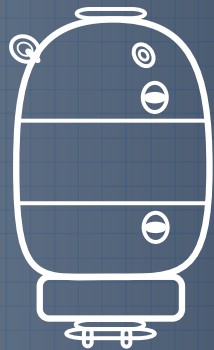
UDT-3 (-) and UDT-1, operating off the USS *Diachenko* (APD-123) spent several weeks locating, marking, and destroying mines, first in Wonsan, then Chinnamp’o, and then Hungnam. “We’d work all day searching and clearing areas, and render an ‘all clear’ report only to discover more mines in the flagged channels the next morning. It was very frustrating. The North Koreans ‘reseeded our zones’ at night,” said UDT-3 Seaman Carrico.<sup>62</sup> “The duty was nerve-wracking! It was a nightmare. Tempers got pretty short,” commented another UDT sailor.<sup>63</sup>

It was 20 October 1950 before ROK I Corps G-2 located a mine depot north of Wonsan. Thirty Russians had left the port on 5 October after assembling mines and supervising the layout of the harbor fields at night with small boats.<sup>64</sup> Primitive 1904-vintage Russian contact mines were laid in fields containing new magnetic influence mines sensitive enough to be triggered by a wooden minesweeper’s engines. This made surface clearing very deadly.<sup>65</sup> The U.S. Navy had more luck at Chinnamp’o.

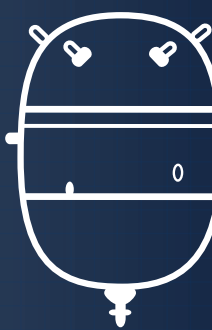
With PBM-5s, helicopters, and a North Korean port pilot to assist, the American Navy had charted the Chinnamp’o minefields by 2 November. Some 217 moored and 25 free floating magnetic mines had been laid in five lines across the main channel north of Sok To Island and one line south of it. Common to the Yellow Sea, large jellyfish more than four feet in diameter drifting a few feet below the surface caused false visual alarms. However, in contrast to Wonsan, no lives or ships were lost while sweeping mines along the seventy mile twisting estuary to that western port.<sup>66</sup> Still, the North Koreans kept sowing Soviet mines at night to plague shipping on both coasts.

# SOVIET MINES ENCOUNTERED IN KOREA

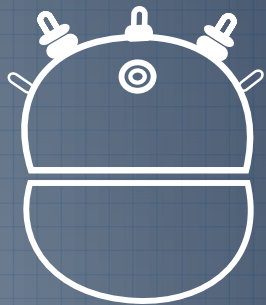
The Soviets provided two moored contact mines (M 26 / MYaM), two magnetic influence mines (KMD 500 / KMD 1000), and one that could be adapted into a contact or influence mine (MKB).



**M-26**  
**Moored Contact Mine**  
Weight: 2116 lbs. (960 kg)  
Warhead: 530 lbs. (240 kg)  
Depth: min. 20 ft. (6 m)  
max. 460 ft. (140 m)  
Platforms: Surface Ships



**MKB**  
**Moored Contact or Influence Mine**  
Weight: 2395 lbs. (1085 kg)  
Warhead: 510 lbs. (230 kg)  
Depth: min. 30 ft. (9 m)  
max. 385 ft. (270 m)  
Platforms: Surface Ships



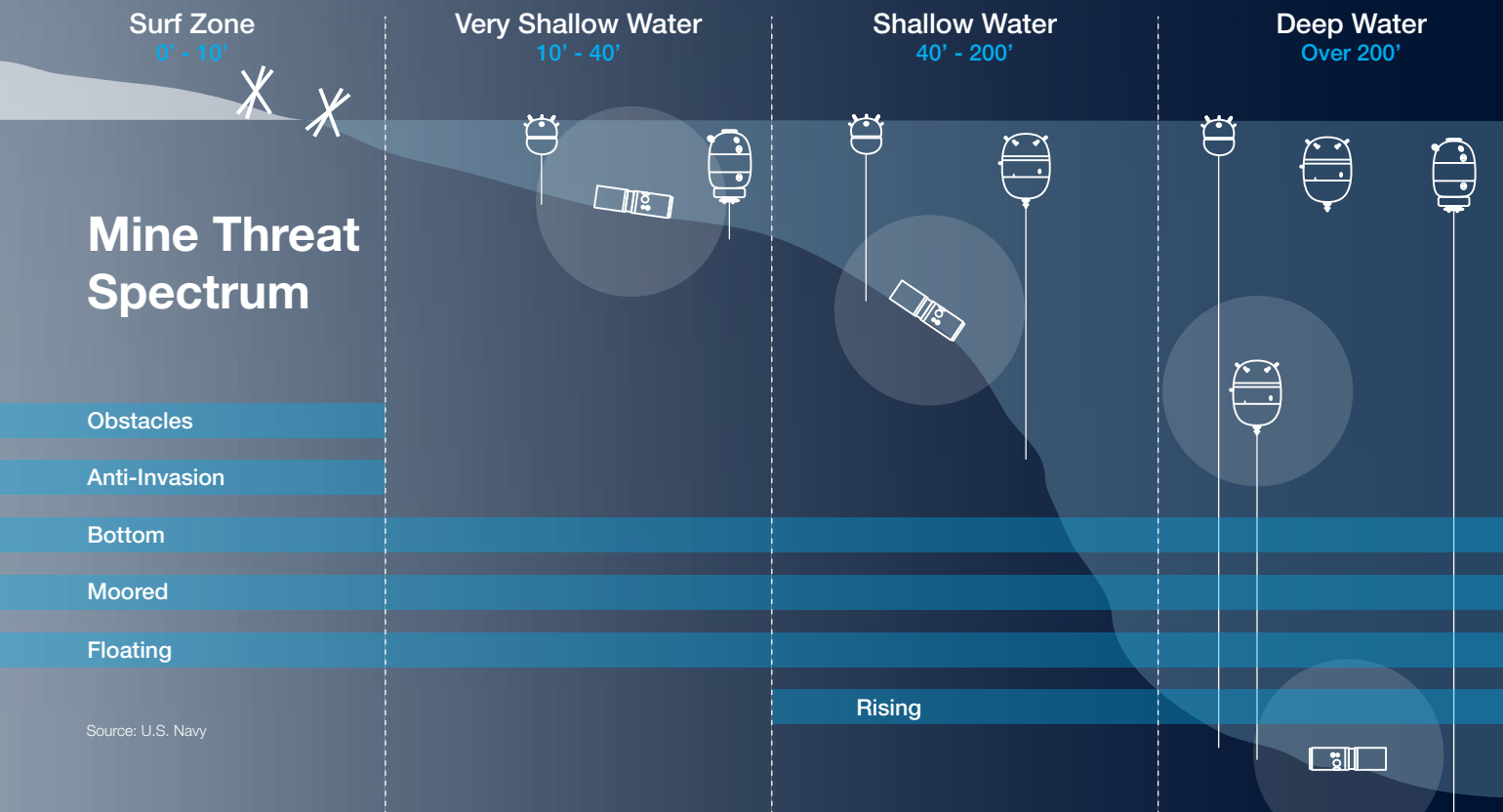
**MYaM**  
**Small Moored Contact Mine**  
Weight: 385 lbs. (164 kg)  
Warhead: 45 lbs. (20 kg)  
Depth: min. 10 ft. (3m)  
max. 197 ft. (60 m)  
Platforms: Surface Ships



**KMD-500**  
**Bottom Influence Mine**  
Weight: 1,100 lbs. (500 kg)  
Warhead: 660 lbs. (300 kg)  
Depth: min. 16 ft. (5 m)  
max. 230 ft. (70 m)  
Platforms: Surface Ships



**KMD-1000**  
**Bottom Influence Mine**  
Weight: 2,205 lbs. (1,000 kg)  
Warhead: 1,540 lbs. (700 kg)  
Depth: min. 16 ft. (5 m)  
max. 655 ft. (200 m)  
Platforms: Surface Ships



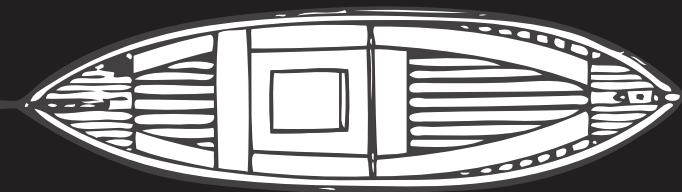


# Landing/Transport Craft Comparison

## 26' Motor Whaleboat

MK10 (Nonmagnetic)

Purpose:	To transport personnel and for use as a lifeboat.
Capacity:	22 men, including crew.
Crew:	2
Length:	26' 3/8
Beam:	7 4 5/8
Draft:	2' 4" loaded
Displacement:	8,850 lbs. (open), 9,070 lbs. (canopied).
Speed:	7 knots at full load displacement.



26' 3/8"

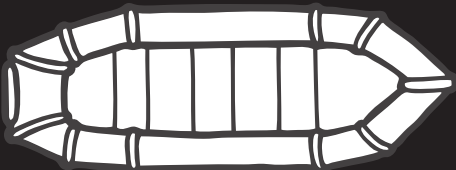


The 26 foot MKII Navy Whaleboat (NWB) was plywood. Its radar signature was almost non existent, even when the canvas shelter was erected.

## Landing Craft, Rubber

(Large) [LCR(L)]

Purpose:	To carry personnel as needed for combat missions and/or rescue.
Capacity:	10 men, including crew.
Crew:	1
Length:	16
Beam:	8
Draft:	0'
Displacement:	395 lb. light, 474 lb with motor
Speed:	4.5 knots with 91/2 outboard motor; 57 yards/minute for 8 experienced paddlers (2 3 miles normal paddling range before combat)



16'



The LCRL or LCR (L) (Landing Craft Rubber Large) was an inflatable boat used by the USMC and US Army in WWII and Korea.

the river. Thus, they 'leap-frogged' their MWB at night along the coast at eight to ten knots an hour.<sup>73</sup>

Successful raids prompted Tofte and MAJ Kramer to plan a repeat in the spring. The maintenance crew of the destroyer tender USS *Dixie* (AD-14), berthed at Sasebo, installed a 200 HP Gray Marine diesel engine, larger fuel tanks, bilge pumps and sewed 'survival suits' for everyone. This time the CIA maritime raiders would also attack the heart of the problem—the *sampans* fleets loaded with mines.<sup>74</sup>

Sea trials off a destroyer escort (DE), designated as their 'mother ship,' confirmed the readiness of the refurbished MWB for combat. The CIA team assault tactics were validated against a pair of *sampans* discovered dumping mines. With a Ranger kneeling on each side of the bow with 30.06 cal. M-1918 Browning Automatic Rifles (BAR), two others standing over them with M-1 .30 cal. Garand



(L) USS *Mansfield* with the bus-sized mine hole in its bow.  
(R) The USS *Mansfield* sailed back to Bremerton, Washington with its 'blunted bow.'



rifles, and the sergeant in the cockpit with another Garand, BM Warwick steered his MWB straight at each *sampan*. They did not have to wait to engage at five hundred yards because the North Korean crews began firing small arms. Both assaults triggered mines that blew the wooden vessels to smithereens in violent explosions. It took longer to locate the mines already set adrift and to detonate them with rifle fire. Still, they could not have had a better 'trial by fire' rehearsal for their upcoming mission.<sup>75</sup>

Installation of a mount for a .50 cal. machinegun on the bow followed. A gunner's mate was added to the Navy crew for that weapons system. BM Warwick convinced the DE captain that a ten knot night seaside launch would mask the MWB in the ship's radar silhouette. That tactic increased the odds for mission success.<sup>76</sup> Instead of 'bee lining' back to the loitering DE afterwards, the CIA MWB would head due south hugging the coastline for 250 miles into South Korea. The DE, postured well beyond the international waters line, was to serve as a decoy. Again, the CIA raiders succeeded.<sup>77</sup> In the meantime, the Navy blockade ship captains devised their own defensive measures.

UN destroyers and DEs, assigned 'flycatcher patrol' (searching for North Korean mine-carrying *sampans*) on dark-of-the-moon nights, would slip in quietly and 'light them up' with searchlights, training every gun on the suspicious vessel. During the day, the Navy used their MWBs to eliminate floating mines.<sup>78</sup> Thus, the mine destruction techniques practiced by BM Warwick and the CIA raiders were promulgated in the Seventh Fleet. By then, Hans Tofte and MAJ 'Dutch' Kramer had started creating an East coast guerrilla maritime raiding force.

So, what did the CIA paramilitary activities accomplish in Korea during the first year of the war? Despite the training of hundreds of guerrillas and expenditure of considerable resources, the E&E corridor south of 'MiG

The USS *Dixie* (AD-14) (right rear) provided maintenance support for Seventh Fleet destroyers and destroyer escorts assigned duty off the Korean peninsula during the war. This was a floating repair facility with personnel and equipment aboard capable of performing emergency fourth echelon maintenance at sea. Its temporary rebuilding and repair work was sufficient for vessels (like the destroyers USS *Brush* and *Mansfield*) to limp back to the States for dry dock repairs, maintenance, and refitting. It also served as the flagship of the UN naval blockade commander and was a choice meeting place for special operations planners.





# How does one rate the paramilitary efforts of the CIA in the first year of the war?

1. The establishment of a viable guerrilla E&E overland corridor for downed UN airmen across North Korea was a failure. Hundreds of guerrillas were inserted into an inhospitable North Korea by boat and parachute, never to return. Dependency on US airlift for resupply and reinforcement contributed to their compromise and elimination by North Korean security forces. The CIA operated C&C island bases never materialized, but EUSA guerrilla island bases on the West coast fulfilled part of the requirement;
2. The MWB raids on Soviet naval mine distribution sites in North Korea were a success. Hard evidence of Russian support was provided and more than two hundred mines were destroyed. Preparatory demolition attacks against coastal infrastructure targets demonstrated the effectiveness of limited operations and provided the experience for surprise deep raids;
3. Insufficient time to train the guerrillas in amphibious operations was overcome by getting UDT personnel to support rubber boat insertions behind the lines. Detailed U.S. military advisors ensured UN air and naval gunfire support as well as delivery assets;
4. The success of the UDT and Ranger/Navy team demolition raids against East Coast infrastructure prompted Hans Tofte and MAJ Dutch Kramer to organize and train a guerrilla Special Mission Group to collect intelligence and conduct maritime raids in early 1951. Their activities will be explained in the article covering JACK activities in Korea, 1951-1953.

Alley' for downed UN airmen never became functional and was not used. The CIA commitment to establish E&E command and control (C&C) centers on islands on each coast never materialized. The gold bars for the aircrew E&E kits were distributed by Hans Tofte; most probably became expensive souvenirs. The 'offshore safety net' provided by smuggler/fishing fleets under contract did not work. Radios were not furnished. Thus, the CIA had no regular means of communication and hence, little control over the contracted assets. On the West coast the guerrilla-held islands enabled forward posting of Air Force rescue aircraft and boats to reduce 'May Day' response time and extend air-sea searches.

The local population did not support the E&E corridor guerrillas. It was a very rugged, inhospitable living environment deep behind the lines. Naval and air bombardment and guerrilla destruction of infrastructure did not endear either with the local populace; the peasants were the repairmen and village guardsmen. The absence of experienced American advisors to insure discipline and mission focus left bored guerrilla leaders to their own devices. Dependency on aerial resupply also contributed to self-destruction. Airdrops pinpointed guerrilla camps for North Korean military and security forces.

"Despite abysmal results, we had to continue trying. The presence of guerrilla elements behind the lines, regardless of how long they lasted, served to disrupt lines of communication and harassed the North Korean military. Agents had to be inserted if tactical intelligence was to be collected. We still had the covert E&E mission. Paramilitary operations were and still are high risk business," remarked MG John K. 'Jack' Singlaub.<sup>79</sup> While Tofte sent back glowing reports, few guerrillas made it back alive. "The E&E teams were lost or slaughtered," stated Tim Weiner in *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*. "The Agency's paramilitary

operations were not only ineffective but probably morally reprehensible in the number of lives lost."<sup>80</sup>

All in all, a lot of CIA money, time, energy, and thought were dedicated to paramilitary operations and the return was miniscule and illusory. Thousands of Korean volunteers gave their lives trying to accomplish impossible missions behind the lines. The dearth of Asian linguists and culturally aware personnel in CIA employ (or in the U.S. military) who knew anything about Communist-imposed internal social controls ensured that a seemingly callous destruction of Korean intelligence agents and guerrillas continued throughout the war. Despite everything paramilitary successes in that first year of the Korean War were few, but the CIA had the vast majority. ▲

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## Endnotes

- 1 Colonel Rod Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," *Conflict*, 7:2 (1987), 156. **During the Korean War there was only strategic and tactical intelligence.**
- 2 Phillip E. Carrico (UDT-3), interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 1 February 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Letter, George Atcheson (UDT-3) to John B. Dwyer, July 1958, cited in Dwyer, *Commandos From the Sea: The History of Amphibious*



- Special Warfare in World War II and the Korean War* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1998), 237; U.S. Navy. Mobile Training Team Able. Troop Training Unit , Amphibious Training Command, Pacific Fleet, Letter, SUBJECT: Report of Team Operations for the Period 24 July 1950 to 7 November 1950 (ComPhibGruOne letter, file AT6-3/35/ceb Serial 007) dated 6 August 1950, hereafter cited as MTT Able Report.
- 3 John K. Singlaub, *Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century* (NY: Summit Books, 1991), 164; Ben S. Malcolm, *White Tigers: My Secret War in North Korea* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1996), 129.
  - 4 James C. McNaughton, *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II* (Washington, DC: Department of Army, Center of Military History, 2007), 84.
  - 5 Charles H. Briscoe, "Soldier-Sailors in Korea: JACK Maritime Operations," *Veritas* (2006) 2:2, 6-19; Retired MG John K. Singlaub, interview by Briscoe, 9 January 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Central Intelligence Agency, "CIA in Korea: 1946-1965, Volume III," 529, 531. Abbreviated copy provided by CIA.
  - 6 Retired LTC Chester E. Carpenter, 971st CIC Det and TLO, 8240th AU, Korea, interview by Briscoe, 1 April 2006, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date. LTC Carpenter estimated a corps of several divisions was being trained by the Red Army. This was no surprise because large numbers of Koreans fled the peninsula to join Mao Tse-tung against the Japanese during WWII.
  - 7 Joseph C. Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War* (NY: Times Books, 1982), 467; Richard B. Finn, interview by Charles Stuart Kennedy, 8 April 1991, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project at [www.adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Finn.%20Richard%20B.toc.pdf](http://www.adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Finn.%20Richard%20B.toc.pdf) accessed 2/12/2013, hereafter cited by name and date.
  - 8 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 475.
  - 9 MAJ Steven A. Fondacaro, MMAS thesis, "A Strategic Analysis of U.S. Special Operations during the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953," U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS (19 May 1988), 42; Malcolm, *White Tigers*, 129-130.
  - 10 Finn interview, 8 April 1991.
  - 11 Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," 156.
  - 12 Major Shaun M. Darragh, "Where Special Operations Began: Hwanghae-do: The War of the Donkeys," *Army* (November 1984), 68.
  - 13 John P. Finnegan, "The Evolution of US Army HUMINT: Intelligence Operations in the Korean War," *Studies in Intelligence*, 44: 2 (2000), 85.
  - 14 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 467; "George Emanuel Aurell in Schutz/Ferris Family Ancestry" at <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=c77&id=1107> accessed 12/18/2012; Singlaub interview, 9 January 2013.
  - 15 Singlaub interview, 9 January 2013.
  - 16 In actuality there were multiple CIA programs going on simultaneously in the Far East during the Korea War. Four of them were: OPC paramilitary activities in Korea directed from Japan; OSO strategic intelligence collection from Japan; Western Enterprises strategic intelligence and paramilitary operations from Taiwan; and the Philippines. *China Air Transport (CAT) aircraft supported them. The CIA training facility on Saipan was used by all.* John Prados, *Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 2006), 133, 139.
  - 17 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 468-470; Vincent Kramer, interview by Kurt Piehler and Maureen Prado, 21 February 1993, Rutgers University Oral History Archives, 36 at <http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/donors/30-interviewees/interview.html-text/459-kramer-vincent> accessed 1/7/2013, hereafter cited by name and date. Air rescue, while practiced sparingly in WWII, was still in its infancy when the Korean War broke out on 25 June 1950. Far East Air Force had nine H-5 (the 1944/5 vintage Sikorsky RH-5) helicopters in Japan [3<sup>rd</sup> Air Rescue Squadron (ARS)]. The Grumman SA-16 Albatross, twin propeller-driven amphibians, did not get to Japan until late July 1950. Forrest L. Marion, *That Others May Live: USAF Air Rescue in Korea*, The U.S. Air Force in Korea (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Force History and Museums Program, 2004), 2, 3, 21; "S-51/HO3S-1/H-5F, G, H Helicopter," Sikorsky Product History at <http://www.sikorskyarchives.com/S-51.php> accessed 1/15/2013.
  - 18 "Valor Awards for Vincent R. Kramer: Military Times Hall of Valor" at <http://militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/recipient.php?recipientid=5687> accessed 2/15/2013; "Rutgers University Queens Guard Precision Rifle Drill Team - Colonel Vincent R. Kramer" at [http://www.queensguard-rutgers.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=14](http://www.queensguard-rutgers.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14) accessed 1/22/2013.
  - 19 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 468-469.
  - 20 Retired COL John F. Sadler, interviews by Briscoe, 15 October 2003 and 3 March 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; retired MAJ Caesar J. Civitella, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson and Briscoe, 19 January 2001, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; retired MAJ Herbert A. Brucker, interview by Briscoe, 14 November 2005, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
  - 21 Eugene G. Piasecki, "Eighth Army Rangers: First in Korea," *Veritas*, 6:1, 43.
  - 22 Singlaub interview, 25 January 2008; Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 469.
  - 23 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 469.
  - 24 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 469.
  - 25 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 468-69. This proved convenient because in between Korean coastal demolition raids, the U.S. Navy Underwater Demolition Team (UDT-3 and UDT-1) detachments were billeted there. Phil Carrico, "Frogmen in Korea: Bits and Pieces from the Forgotten War" at [http://www.weblube.com/PhilCarricoFirst\\_InlandRaid.html](http://www.weblube.com/PhilCarricoFirst_InlandRaid.html) accessed 1/10/2013
  - 26 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 469; Lee Wha Rang, *The US CIA Young-do Partisans* (Seoul: PROCOM Publishers, 2001) at <http://www.kimsoft.com/2003/Young-doPartisans.htm> accessed 10/13/2003; John E. Cremeans, Jr., "The Role of the USS Begor (APD-127) in Clandestine Operations in North Korea, 1950-51," 2 at <http://www.ussebegor.org/seaStories49.htm> accessed 11/6/2012; Dr. Joe F. Leeker, Air America Japan - Since the Days of CAT," 22 at [www.utdallas.edu/library/collections/speccoll/Leeker/history/Japan.pdf](http://www.utdallas.edu/library/collections/speccoll/Leeker/history/Japan.pdf) accessed 2/12/2013. Three CAT C-46 Commandos entered service in Hans Tofte's OPC air delivery operations in July 1950, followed by a CAT Cessna 195 in September 1950. These CAT C-46s probably wore "night colors."
  - 27 Cremeans, "The Role of the USS Begor (APD-127) in Clandestine Operations in North Korea, 1950-51," 2-3. Cremeans was a June 1950 graduate of Williams College who accepted a CIA employment offer after being classified 1-A by his Draft Board. He got six weeks of training before joining seven others bound for Japan.
  - 28 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 130; George C. Atcheson, III (UDT-3), interview by Briscoe, 3 March 2006, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Lee Wha Rang, *The US CIA Young-do Partisans*.
  - 29 Cremeans, "The Role of the USS Begor (APD-127) in Clandestine Operations in North Korea, 1950-51," 5.
  - 30 U.S. Navy Commander, Naval Forces, Far East (COMNAVF) message DTG 270344Z July 1950 to CTF 90 via Operations Order (OPORDER) 11, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
  - 31 Cdr. Francis Douglas Fane and Don Moore, *Naked Warriors: The Story of the U.S. Navy's Frogmen* (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1956), 239.
  - 32 Fane and Moore, *Naked Warriors*, 239.
  - 33 "MacArthur Aide Lost at Sea, US Says," *The Pittsburgh Press* (PA), 18 August 1947, 1; "Hunt for Atcheson," *Miami Daily News*, 18 August 1947, 1-2; "Atcheson Lost in Airplane's Crash at Sea," *The Milwaukee Journal*, 18 August 1947, 1, 3; Phillip E. Carrico (UDT-3), interview by Briscoe, 30 January 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; George Atcheson, *The Peking Incident* (NY: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1973), 436; Fane and Moore, *Naked Warriors*, 237; "Valor Awards for George C. Atcheson, III: Silver Star - Military Times Hall of Valor," at <http://militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/recipient.php> accessed 2/15/2013.
  - 34 Carrico interviews, 30 January 2013 and 13 February 2013; Carrico, *Exploits of Navy Frogmen in Korea: Pioneers of U.S. Naval Special Warfare* (Hemphill, TX: Dogwood Press, 2004), 11-14.
  - 35 Carrico interviews, 30 January 2013 and 13 February 2013; Carrico, *Exploits of Navy Frogmen in Korea*, 11-14.
  - 36 Carrico interviews, 30 January 2013 and 13 February 2013; Carrico, *Exploits of Navy Frogmen in Korea*, 11-14.
  - 37 Carrico interviews, 30 January 2013 and 13 February 2013; Carrico, *Exploits of Navy Frogmen in Korea*, 11-14; Fane and Moore, *Naked Warriors*, 240.
  - 38 Carrico interview, 30 January 2013.
  - 39 Fane and Moore, *Naked Warriors*, 240-242; "MAJ Edward P. Dupras, Jr., Silver Star," citation for 12-25 August 1950 raids at [http://www.koreanwar-educator.org/topics/silver\\_star/p\\_silver\\_star\\_citations\\_d.htm](http://www.koreanwar-educator.org/topics/silver_star/p_silver_star_citations_d.htm) accessed 2/15/2013.
  - 40 Letter, Rear Admiral K.J. Christoph, Jr. to John B. Dwyer, May 1994, and Letter, George Atcheson to John B. Dwyer, October 1985, cited in *Commandos From the Sea*, 240, 241.
  - 41 Fane and Moore, *Naked Warriors*, 243.
  - 42 Letter, George Atcheson to John B. Dwyer, July 1985, cited in Dwyer, *Commandos From the Sea*, 237. LTJG Atcheson was later recruited by MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer to train the guerrillas supporting the CIA E&E network in North Korea. Boat training was conducted on Yong-do. Atcheson interview, 3 March 2006.
  - 43 MAJ Robert E. Mattingly, unpublished U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College Paper, "Herringbone Cloak - GI Dagger Marines of the OSS," (Quantico, VA: USMC Development and Education Command, 1979), 103; "Thomas L. Curtis, Warrant Officer, USMC, Silver Star" at <http://militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/recipient.php?recipientid=35929> accessed 2/15/2013.
  - 44 Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 469-470.
  - 45 Cremeans, "The Role of the USS Begor (APD-127) in Clandestine Operations in North Korea, 1950-51," 4, 5.



- 46 Carrico interviews, 30 January 2013 and 13 February 2013; Carrico, *Stories of Navy Frogmen in Korea*, 57-60; UDT-3, aboard the *Begor*, had already done a reconnaissance of the West coast islands south of Wonsan for TF Leopard, EUSA Guerrilla Command.
- 47 Cremeans, "The Role of the USS *Begor* (APD-127) in Clandestine Operations in North Korea, 1950-51," 6, 7, 10, 11; Lee Wha Rang, *The US CIA Young-do Partisans*, 33, 45, 53, 54.
- 48 Cremeans, "The Role of the USS *Begor* (APD-127) in Clandestine Operations in North Korea, 1950-51," 6, 7, 10, 11.
- 49 Christopher Pontrelli, "The 'Butchers of Kapsan,'" *Naval History Magazine*, October 2007, 21:5 at <http://www.usni.org/magazines/naavalhistory/2007-10/butchers-kapsan> accessed 11/7/2012.
- 50 Pontrelli, "The 'Butchers of Kapsan,'" 5.
- 51 Pontrelli, "The 'Butchers of Kapsan,'" 5.
- 52 Michael E. Haas, *In the Devil's Shadow: U.N. Special Operations During the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2001), 178.
- 53 Haas, *In the Devil's Shadow*, 178.
- 54 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011 and 18 November 2011.
- 55 Edward J. Marolda, Mine Warfare, "Selected Naval Documents: Korean War at <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/minewar.htm> accessed 2/5/2013; "Pirate and Pledge – Korean Documentary" at <http://www.kmike.com/pledge.htm> accessed 2/5/2013; Andrew S. Erikson, Lyle J. Goldstein, and William S. Murray, "Chinese Warfare: A PLA Navy 'Assassin Mac' Capability," Chinese Maritime Study No. 3 (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College, 2009), 6 at [www.usnwc.edu/cnws/cmsi/default.aspx](http://www.usnwc.edu/cnws/cmsi/default.aspx) accessed 2/5/2013.
- 56 MG V.A. Zolotarev, V.A. Yaremenko, A.N. Pochtarev, and A.V. Usikov, *Russia (USSR) in Local Wars and Regional Conflicts in the Second Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, 11 at <http://korean-war.com/russianregionalconflicts.html> accessed 9/24/2012; Tamara M. Melia, "Damn the Torpedoes": A Short History of U.S. Naval Mine Countermeasures, 1777-1991, *Contributions to Naval History series*, No. 4 (Washington, DC: Naval Historical Center, 1991), 77; Roy E. Appleman, *Disaster in Korea: The Chinese Confront MacArthur*, 2nd edition (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 28.
- 57 "Mining Action Report" from "USS *Mansfield* (DD-728) Mine Incident" at <http://web.meganet.net/kman/nfmime.htm> accessed 2/26/2013.
- 58 *The Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships* at <http://www.hazegray.org/danfs/> accessed 1/31/2013, hereafter cited as DANFS.
- 59 Cdr. David D. Bruhn, *Wooden Ships and Iron Men: The U.S. Navy's Ocean Minesweepers, 1953-1994* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2006), xxi; "DD-723" and "DD-722" at DANFS accessed 2/11/2013; "USS *Ernest G. Small* (DD-838)" at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS\\_G.\\_Small\\_\(DD-838\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_G._Small_(DD-838)) accessed 2/11/2013; "USS *Magpie* (AMS-25)" at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS\\_Magpie\\_\(AMS-25\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Magpie_(AMS-25)) accessed 2/11/2013; "USS *Sarsi* (ATF-111)" at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS\\_Sarsi\\_\(ATF-111\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Sarsi_(ATF-111)) accessed 2/11/2013; Melia, "Damn the Torpedoes," 73; Erikson, Goldstein and Murray, "Chinese Warfare," 6.
- 60 Melia, "Damn the Torpedoes," 76; Erikson, Goldstein and Murray, "Chinese Warfare," 6.
- 61 Within weeks of invading South Korea, the North Koreans were receiving railcar loads of mines from Russia. They included very sensitive magnetic mines that reacted to wooden hulled vessels. Experienced Soviet mine warfare officers and sailors personally helped mine the ports of Wonsan and Chinnamp'o with contact, magnetic, and controlled mines while instructing the North Koreans in mine warfare techniques. Mines were also delivered to In'chon, Haeju, Kunsan, and Mokpo. Melia, "Damn the Torpedoes," 71, 75; LCDR Jason D. Menarchik, "North Korean Protective Mine Warfare: An Analysis of the Naval Minefields at Wonsan, Chinnampo and Hungnam During the Korean War," unpublished thesis, April 2010, U.S. Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, 9, 17.
- 62 Carrico interview, 30 January 2013.
- 63 Russ Eoff, Bill Tobin, and John Kelly, "UDT Operations in Korea: Wonsan" at <http://www.navyfrogmen.com/UDTKorea3.html> accessed 2/5/2013.
- 64 Appleman, *South to the Nakdong, North to the Yalu (June-November 1950): United States Army in the Korean War* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 2000), 635.
- 65 Melia, "Damn the Torpedoes," 77.
- 66 Appleman, *Disaster in Korea*, 32-33.
- 67 Menarchik, "North Korean Protective Mine Warfare," 14.
- 68 When the Ranger Infantry Companies (Airborne) were disbanded in the summer of 1951, most of the soldiers and sergeants were assigned to the 187<sup>th</sup> Airborne Regimental Combat Team (ARCT), the FEC reserve in Japan. After combat garrison duty and winter training in central Japan, the 'rear area' had little appeal. Since the Rangers were 'rank heavy' their integration into the 187<sup>th</sup> ARCT infantry units 'bumped' a lot of veterans from leader positions. The Rangers were not warmly welcomed. These factors were enough for some Rangers to 'volunteer for extremely hazardous, highly classified missions behind enemy lines.' Acheson interview, 3 March 2006; Singlaub interview, 21 March 2012. CIA OSO North Korean agents had penetrated the Soviet naval base at Vladivostok as part of the local work force that performed menial labor and stevedore duties. In addition to reporting on Russian aircraft and ship movements, they unloaded and loaded equipment, supplies, and munitions (naval sea mines). Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, 470; Briscoe, "Do what you can! U.N. Civil Assistance, Chinnamp'o, North Korea, November-December 1950," *Veritas* 6:1, 108. Providing Rangers for special duty assignments was common. Major Jack T. Young, the Ivanhoe Security Force (ISF) commander, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division (ID), arranged for specialized training from the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne). Second Lieutenant (2LT) William M. Cole and several NCOs presented classes in care and operation of Soviet, Chinese, and Japanese weapons as well as raiding and sabotage operations. They also helped MAJ Young conduct a guerrilla warfare course for the 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> ROK Army (ROKA) Division junior leaders in X Corps. Retired MSG L. Carl Heesch, interview by Briscoe, 12 December 2005, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Heesch, "The Ivanhoe Security Force"; HQ, Ivanhoe Security Force, 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Infantry Division, APO 248 letter 4 July 1951 SUBJECT: Training, COL Jack T. Young Collection, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; ISF letter dated 4 July 1951, SUBJECT: Training; HQ X Corps, APO 909, CG OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE Classified Message, SUBJECT: Extension of Guerrilla Training dated 19 June 1951, Young Collection. "The North Korean Navy, with the help of Soviet sailors, managed to lay more than 3,000 Soviet-made mines in coastal areas. These mine fields significantly reduced the activities of the American Navy." Zolotarev, Yaremenko, Pochtarev and Usikov, *Russia (USSR) in Local Wars and Regional Conflicts in the Second Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, 11; Appleman, *Disaster in Korea*, 28; 1st Lt. Charles A. Rogers, "QM Operations 1st Cavalry Division, Korea," *Quartermaster Review*, July-August 1951, 1 reprinted at [http://www.qmmuseum.lee.army.mil/korea/1steava\\_qm.htm](http://www.qmmuseum.lee.army.mil/korea/1steava_qm.htm) accessed 12/29/2009.
- 69 William C. Warwick, Jr., *A Sailor Comes Home* (Booneville, NC: Whitline Ink, 2008), 129-144; Warwick, *Sampan Blockade: A Sailor's Story of Survival* (Carolina Beach, NC: Slap Dash Publishing, 2010), 192-195. "Boatswain's Mates train and supervise personnel in all activities relating to marlinspike, deck, and boat seamanship, and oversee the maintenance of the ship's external structure and deck equipment. They act as petty officers in charge of small craft and may perform duties as master-at-arms, serve in or take charge of gun crews, and manage control parties." "List of United States Navy ratings" at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_United\\_States\\_Navy\\_ratings](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_Navy_ratings) accessed 11/9/2012.
- 70 Retired Chief Warrant Boatswain Marvin Curry, interview by Library of Congress, 27 May 2004, Veterans History Project, AFC 2001/001/B170-MDR #255; Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War*, photo section; retired CDR John E. Conjura, "How did the U.S.S. *Little Rock* come to be at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park," at [http://www.uslittlerock.org/Little\\_Rock\\_in\\_Buffalo.html](http://www.uslittlerock.org/Little_Rock_in_Buffalo.html) accessed 4/9/2013; Warwick, *Sampan Blockade*, 6. Navy Seaman (SM) Marvin Curry (25 July 1933 – 24 July 2010) was a full-blooded Seneca (Snipe Clan) from Cattaraugus Territory, New York. He attended Burgard Vocational School, Buffalo, NY, before enlisting in the Navy on 2 October 1950. Curry volunteered for a two year 'shore' detail with the CIA after meeting his infantryman brother Wilbur in Korea. He assisted LTJG George C. Acheson, III, with small boat training and was part of Warwick's MWB crew during the Agency attacks on the Soviet sea mine distribution sites on the East coast of North Korea. He retired 31 October 1970 as a Chief Warrant Boatswain (CWO-2). SSG Wilbur 'Chief' Curry, Jr., B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division (Airmobile) was killed in action at Ia Drang, Vietnam, on 15 November 1965.
- 71 Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," 163-64.
- 72 Carrico, "Frogmen in Korea: Bits and Pieces from the Forgotten War" at [http://www.weblube.com/PhilCarricoFirst\\_InlandRaid.html](http://www.weblube.com/PhilCarricoFirst_InlandRaid.html) accessed 1/10/2013.
- 73 Warwick, *Sampan Blockade*, 23; Blizzards on 8 January 1951 forced U.S. Navy Task Force (TF) 77 aircraft carriers to suspend close air support (CAS) missions for X Corps in eastern Korea. Continued severe winter weather caused 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force to also cancel CAS. Far East Air Force (FEAF) flew the lowest daily number of sorties since July 1950. "Air War Korea, 1950-53," *AIR FORCE Magazine* (October 2000), 44-45.
- 74 Warwick, *Sampan Blockade*, 95, 101-102, 103.
- 75 Warwick, *Sampan Blockade*, 134-137.
- 76 Warwick, *Sampan Blockade*, 141-142.
- 77 Warwick, *Sampan Blockade*, 144, 145, 149, 161.
- 78 Warwick, *Sampan Blockade*, 185-186, 199-204, 207; Thomas F. Fosmire, interview by Briscoe, 6 September 2005, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 79 Singlaub interview, 9 January 2013; Sadler interview, 18 April 2012.
- 80 Tim Weiner, *A Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* (NY: Anchor Books, 2008), 63, 61.



# A Korean War PHOTO MEMOIR

This photo collection of retired First Sergeant (1SG) James Carlo 'Joe' Pagnella (deceased) was furnished by James M. Pagnella, one of his twin sons (the other is James Christopher). Quotes in the captions come from a 28 February 1995 Pagnella letter to John B. 'Barry' Dwyer, the author of *Commandos From The Sea: The History of Amphibious Special Warfare in World War II and The*

*Korean War* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1998). These old pictures provide 'identity' to the CIA and JACK paramilitary advisors and reality to the Yong-do training areas used by the SMG (Special Mission Group) raiders and the U.S. Navy support, as well as humanity displayed by the American fighting man worldwide. Many thanks to the Pagnellas for sharing the family treasure.

## Getting the CIA Guerrillas and Special Mission Group 'Off the Ground'



ROK Army CPT Han Chul-min and the initial guerrilla training cadre were trained by USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer at the CIA facility on Atsugi Airbase, Japan.



Most CIA civilian case officers overseas in Japan and Korea were recent college graduates who had been given two months of paramilitary training at Fort Benning, GA, before being shipped off to the Far East. Henry A. 'Hap' Deshields (above & right), who supported the Yong-do advisors, was called 'Hap Arnold' by the Koreans.



US Navy UDT-3 LT George C. Atcheson, III (l) was recruited by MAJ 'Dutch' Kramer to teach rubber assault boat handling, navigation, scout swimming, and coastal maritime raiding to the Special Mission Group (SMG). He became the senior American advisor for the SMG. Sitting in the back of the jeep is Chon Do-hyun, 'John Chun,' the primary SMG interpreter, who was killed in action.



# ROK Minister of Defense Visits Yong-do Guerrilla Training Facility

The wooden structure in the right rear of the left side of the formation is a makeshift jump platform built by SFC James C. Pagnella for ground training. Twenty-five SMG raiders were qualified as parachutists after two jumps, one day and one at night, done at 750 feet without reserves. MAJ John K. Singlaub jumped with them on the Han River drop zone.



The American cadre present when the ROK MOD came to Yong-do were: 3rd from L, USMC 1LT Thomas L. Curtis and 4th from L, SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella in Class 'A' uniforms, and 5th from L, Henry A. 'Hap' Deshields in a modified field uniform.



The South Korean Minister of Defense addressed and reviewed the 300-man CIA guerrilla force and Special Mission Group (45 personnel) during a visit to the island in late spring 1952. Both national flags were appropriately flown. Heavily-vegetated mountainous terrain dominates the backdrop.



# The Yong-do Guerrilla Training Camp

A causeway built by the Japanese connected Yong-do to the southern landfall of Pusan. This effectively turned the hilly, heavily-vegetated, sparsely-populated island into a peninsula. SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella said the trip by jeep was a "complete kidney buster of a ride."



"The initial American 'advisors' on Yong-do were: L to R: SFC Pagnella, CPT Hilary H. 'Hunt' Crawford, civilian James O'Brien, and 1LT Tom Curtis (absent from photo)."



"Yong-do was very remote, rugged, and strikingly impressive. Covered with trees, it had steep rocky cliffs down to the water and the few 'pebble' beaches were covered with rocks," recalled SFC Pagnella.

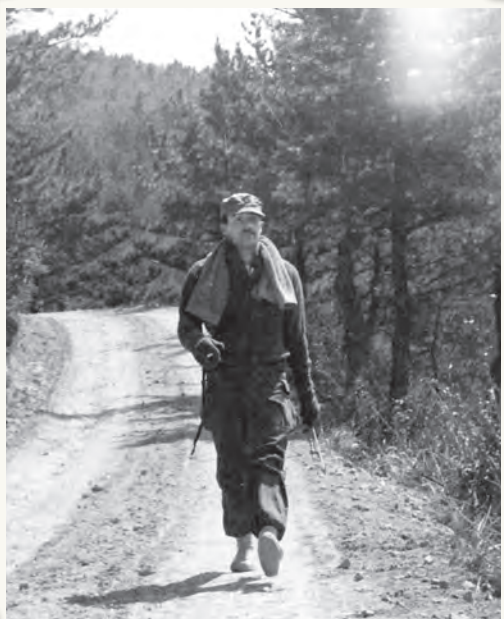


USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer was in charge of the Yong-do guerrilla and SMG training. 1LT Tom Curtis and MAJ Kramer were glad to have an Army doctor, MAJ Thomas McChesney, conduct physical examinations of guerrilla and SMG candidates (L to R: unknown helicopter pilot, 1LT Thomas L. Curtis, MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer, and MAJ Thomas McChesney).



"In the Yong-do camp we had a tent reserved for mission briefings. Henry A. 'Hap' Deshields, a civilian case officer, is giving a mission brief to Special Mission Group leaders."





Paratrooper SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella walks back to camp after a chilling bath in Pusan harbor.



Dirt roads connected the training and cantonment areas of the former Japanese Army facility on thickly-forested Yong-do.



(Above & Right) "CPT Hilary H. 'Hunt' Crawford, a WWII OSS veteran, approved the construction of a 1,000 inch 'zero range' and a 250 yard rifle range with double sandbagged backstops. USMC 1LT Thomas L. Curtis and I taught .45 cal. pistol marksmanship on Point #3 of the 1,000 inch range."



"Rocky 'low tide' islands served as targets for 57mm antitank recoilless rifle training given to US Navy UDT LT George C. Atcheson, III," remarked SFC Pagnella. "He was very impressed. I proudly proved my point. The 57 recoilless rifle would be carried by the SMG."





# Coastal Raiding Preparations

## SMG Raids from the USS Wantuck, APD-125



The USS *Wantuck*, APD-125 anchored off Yong-do awaiting a JACK SMG mission.

The SMG raiders launch RB-10 rubber assault boats from the Yong-do beach for a mission with the USS *Wantuck*, APD-125.



JACK paramilitary advisors (foreground) and the JACK guerrilla force lined up along the Yong-do shore watch the SMG paddle RB-10s out to the USS *Wantuck*, APD-125.



It was traditional for the JACK guerrilla force to salute the departure and return of the SMG with loud cheering.





Instead of being towed by an LCVP the SMG raiders had to paddle the RB-10s nearly a mile to the waiting USS *Wantuck*, APD-125.

As the SMG approached the USS *Wantuck*, APD-125, an LCVP prepared to practice towing the RB-10s in a 'daisy chain' to rehearse the coming raid operation, mid-March 1952. *Wantuck* crewmen are 'standing by' to recover the boats.



*Wantuck* LCVP hooked up to practice tow the SMG RB-10s.

While the JACK guerrillas watch the SMG raiders disappear into a cloud bank that regularly enveloped the Yong-do coast in winter.





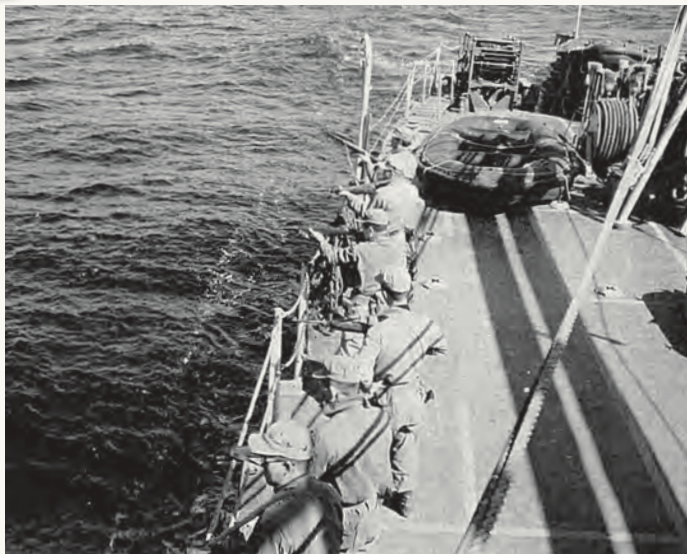
# Coastal Raiding Preparations (Continued)



USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer, center foreground observes the practice tow of the RB-10s.



With LCVP tow training completed the RB-10s come alongside the *Wantuck* for boat recovery. The SMG soldiers climb rope ladders to come aboard.



Enroute to their drop site the SMG raiders test fire their small arms (M-1 rifles & carbines, Thompson sub-machineguns, BARs, and .45 cal. pistols) from the bow of the *Wantuck*.



SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella test fires the 57mm antitank recoilless rifle off the bow of the *Wantuck*. His assistant gunner was Chou.





A group of SMG raiders wanted their picture taken with SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella while aboard the *Wantuck*.



The SMG is assembled on the aft deck of the *Wantuck* for a final mission briefing on Iwon. "We were to ambush a supply convoy, capture some drivers, and determine their cargo. Our secondary mission was to destroy transportation means (roads, railroad, bridges)," said SFC Pagnella.

Mr. Oh Pak, the nominal SMG first sergeant, has a last minute talk with Henry A. 'Hap' Deshields, one of the CIA case officers, aboard the *Wantuck*. "Oh Pak was a stately, middle-aged man with a light build. He had a stringy mustache and beard, and his hair curled out from under his USMC utility cap. Pak wore a .38 pistol with a belt full of bullets strapped to his waist. Though he had the piercing eyes of a predatory panther, he was gentle, but audacious like a pirate," said SFC Pagnella who occasionally sparred with him in Korean *Kindo*.



The SMG raiders enjoy the sunshine on the aft deck of the *Wantuck* amongst their RB-10s.





# James C. 'Joe' Pagnella

Private to First Sergeant, 1948-1969



Private First Class (PFC) James C. 'Joe' Pagnella and Corporal (CPL) Raymond Norton, 187th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 11th Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, KY, attended the sixteen week Infantry Weapons NCO Course at Fort Benning, GA, 1949-1950.



Staff Sergeant (SSG) James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, F Company, 2nd Battalion, 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team (ARCT), walks away from his first combat jump at Suncheon, North Korea, on 20 October 1950 (D+10 minutes).



SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, JACK SMG advisor, and Mr. Oh Pak, nominal SMG first sergeant at the base of the cliffs on Yong-do, 1951.



First Sergeant (1SG) James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, C Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry (Golden Dragons), 25th Infantry Division takes a break in Vietnam, 1966-1967.



# Kids Warm a Soldier's Heart



Another 'treat' for the orphans was seeing up close the WWII-vintage twin-engine Beechcraft C-45 *Expeditor* that brought the food and clothing. Air Force pilot LT John W. MacDonald, SFC 'Joe' Pagnella, and SMG interpreter Chon Do-hyun, 'John Chun,' joined the children and orphanage staff for a photo.

Obviously missing his twin sons back home SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella has perched his overseas cap on a little Korean boy more interested in his pack of *Necco Jells*.



SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella and SMG interpreter Chon Do-hyun, 'John Chun,' deliver food and clothes to a nearby orphanage.



# Military Recovery

by Charles H. Briscoe

of Downed Airmen in  
Eastern Korea





The American military services invest considerable time and money to qualify pilots and aircrew members to operate aircraft anytime and under any conditions. Compounded with those environmental demands are combat air patrols, close air support, bombing raids, reconnaissance, and air delivery missions associated with prosecuting war. Outnumbered UN land forces in the Korean War (1950-1953) relied heavily on air support. Maintaining air superiority was critical to counterbalancing Communist forces. Combat experienced aircrews continue to be more valuable than aircraft. 'Shoot downs' have to be mitigated by quick aircrew recoveries. This keeps combat experienced airmen in the fight and morale high among military flyers today, just as it did during the Korean war.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1950, any pilot shot down behind enemy lines was expected to 'walk out' as best he could.<sup>2</sup> When it became obvious that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was not able to establish a guerrilla-operated escape and evasion (E&E) corridor across North Korea, UN pilots rapidly learned to fly their crippled aircraft to the coasts. The island of Paengnyong-do on the Northwest coast in the Yellow Sea and Yo-do outside Wonsan harbor on the East coast had U.S. military-supported guerrillas. Far East Air Force (FEAF) was given responsibility for coordinating Army, Navy, and

Air Force search and rescue activities in the Far East Command (FEC). Naval Forces Far East (NAVFE) and FEAF formed an aircrew recovery operations cell while the two services scrambled in the States to expand air and sea rescue capabilities.<sup>3</sup>

U.S. military aircraft and tactics for recovering downed aircrews in Korea were WWII vintage. Helicopters were 1945 production Sikorsky H-5 *Dragonfly*s. They had already replaced seaplanes aboard aircraft carriers for pilot rescues and performed reconnaissance for battleships and cruisers. The woefully understrength U.S. Air Force Air Rescue Service (ARS) was equipped with WWII fixed wing aircraft (L-5 *Sentinel*, SC-47 *Skytrain*, SB-17 *Flying Fortress*, and SB-29 *Superfortress*) and some H-5 *Dragonfly* helicopters.<sup>4</sup> Although the SA-16 *Albatross* (twin-engine amphibian) was being fielded, neither Pacific-based squadron had received them.<sup>5</sup>

The ARS scrambled to get its 3<sup>rd</sup> Rescue Squadron (RS) up to strength. Temporary duty (TDY) was the solution. The 2<sup>nd</sup> RS on Okinawa furnished airmen until personnel could come from the States. The 5<sup>th</sup> RS at Lowry Field, Colorado, provided its SA-16 detachment for 150 days. The Air Force gave Korea-bound aircraft parts, supplies, and mechanics priority. The 3<sup>rd</sup> received its SB-29 complement in August 1950.<sup>6</sup>

The 3<sup>rd</sup> RS pushed Detachment F forward to K-2 (combat airstrip) in Taegu, Korea. It had L-5 *Sentinels* and H-5 *Dragonfly* helicopters. By the Armistice in July 1953, 3<sup>rd</sup> RS aircraft had rescued 997 UN personnel; the H-5 *Dragonfly* and H-19 *Chickasaw* helicopters picked up 846 (730 and 116 respectively). The 3<sup>rd</sup> RS helicopters handled a third of the air MEDEVACs (8,373 personnel of an estimated 25,000 UN casualties) flown to rear area hospitals.<sup>7</sup> Recovery rates increased by rotating helicopters, crews, and crash rescue boat teams to Paengnyong-do and Yo-do, keeping a SA-16 *Albatross* aloft during large air attacks on North



United States Seventh Fleet Pocket Insignia



Far East Air Force SSI



U.S.A.F. Air Rescue Service Pocket Insignia



UN pilots learned to fly crippled aircraft toward the coasts. U.S.-military supported guerrillas were on the islands of Paengnyong-do (West coast) and Yo-do outside Wonsan harbor (East Coast).



Detachment F, 3<sup>rd</sup> Rescue Squadron was pushed forward to K-2 airstrip outside Taegu, Korea in the fall of 1950.



# World War II Aircraft

## dominated the U.S.A.F. Air Rescue Service in Korea



The WWII vintage Stinson L 5 *Sentinel* was part of the 3rd ARS 'first response' package to Korea in 1950.



The SC 47 *Skytrain* carried rubber life rafts which were airdropped to airmen downed over water.



The SB 17 *Flying Fortress* carried an air droppable life boat under its fuselage.



Like the SB 17, the SB 29 *Superfortress* carried a life boat, only larger.



The Grumman SA 16 *Albatross*, a twin engine amphibian, was being fielded to the U.S.A.F. Air Rescue Service when war broke out in Korea. The black painted model was used to support special operations missions.



A 3rd RS H 5 *Dragonfly* helicopter crew carries a wounded soldier to an ambulance in Korea.

*Note:* Because the U.S. military services applied different nomenclatures to aircraft, Sikorsky model numbers with Army nicknames are used: H-5 *Dragonfly* and H-19 *Chickasaw*.



Korea, and by employing crash boats from Japan. Navy aircraft carriers relied on integral H-5s and 3<sup>rd</sup> RS assets, but ingeniously employed other resources.

After the Hungnam evacuation in December 1950, LST-799 returned to Yokosuka to be converted into a mobile tender and supply base for mine spotting helicopters and minesweepers. Capable of handling three H-5 helicopters topside, air-sea rescue soon became its primary mission. Though typically stationed on the leeward side of Yo-do, "the majority of our rescues were performed underway," said skipper LT T.E. Houston, "and most of them were over land. I would head the LST to the nearest safe spot [adjacent] to land to reduce the flight distance as much as possible."<sup>8</sup> "Our total pilot recovery score was twenty-four, two by boat and twenty-two by helicopter. Our big rescue day was 13 June 1952," commented LT Paul D. Drummond, the succeeding captain of LST-799.<sup>9</sup> Some helicopter rescues were accomplished at night, under enemy fire.

Navy LT S.B. Murphy, a night attack pilot, was shot down on 29 January 1952 near Hungnam. When the LST-799 helicopter (piloted by LTJG J.T. Stultz), reached the area, LT Murphy was spotted running across a snow-covered rice paddy pursued by five enemy soldiers. When he stopped momentarily to light a flare, a bullet creased his neck. LT Stultz landed the H-5 and Seaman R.L. Martin pulled the exhausted Murphy aboard.<sup>10</sup> Additional recovery measures were needed for Wonsan.

The harbor had become a major destination for pilots flying disabled aircraft. LTC Richard G. Warga, the Marine Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) commander, suggested that the old Japanese airstrip on Yo-do (2500 feet) be lengthened and widened to accommodate landings by most single and twin-engine propeller aircraft. Though the North Koreans had several shore batteries within range, the number of Seventh Fleet planes that might be saved (ratio of jet to propeller sorties was 1:1 in June 1952) and the morale boost for pilots made the risks acceptable. Seabees of Naval Beach Group One did it in sixteen days (25 June 1952), four weeks ahead of schedule with a ramp for barges to easily recover the non-flyable airplanes. This measure paid for itself on 15 July 1952 when seven WWII-era F4U Corsairs, short on fuel, avoided ditching in Wonsan harbor. Though the enemy coastal batteries shelled Yo-do daily, the airstrip was never rendered unusable.<sup>11</sup>

Knowledge that the Air Force and Navy had dedicated, competent air rescue teams willing to risk their aircraft and crew to recover them was a major relief to UN pilots. Though only ten percent of USAF airmen downed during the Korean War were saved, half of the 'shoot downs' had no realistic chance for rescue. Paengnyong-do on the West coast and Yo-do on the East were reliable island bases for launching air and sea rescues.<sup>12</sup> West coast guerrillas helped to recover more than a hundred airmen. Pilots quickly realized that their survival depended on getting to seas patrolled by UN blockade vessels. Air Force and Navy rescue elements were best prepared and the most reliable. ♣



3rd RS personnel practice securing a 'wounded' dummy in the 'people pod' of their H-5 Dragonfly helicopter.



A 3rd RS Sikorsky H-19 Chickasaw helicopter practices a winch recovery of a simulated downed pilot in the ocean off Korea (1953).



(L to R) LT Dixon rescued LT junior grade Keene offshore of Wonsan. The lifesaving ring buoy with seven 'hashmarks' on the H-5 fuselage indicates seven rescues by LT Dixon.



U.S. Navy Utility Helicopter Squadron One (HU-1) flew aircrew rescue missions from the LSTs. This was their flight jacket patch.



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Charles H. Briscoe has been the USASOC Command Historian since 2000. A graduate of The Citadel, this retired Army special operations officer earned his PhD from the University of South Carolina. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, in El Salvador, and the Lodge Act.

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## Endnotes

- 1 Forrest L. Marion, *That Others May Live: USAF Air Rescue in Korea* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Force History and Museums Program, 2004), 25.
- 2 Marion, *That Others May Live*, 47.
- 3 U.S. Air Force Historical Study No. 95: *Air-Sea Rescue 1941-1952* (Maxwell, AFB, AL: USAF Historical Division, Research Studies Institute, Air University, August 1954), 160.
- 4 *Air-Sea Rescue 1941-1952*, 160-161.



U.S. Navy Utility Helicopter Squadron One (HU-1) airmen from Unit 10 aboard LST-799: (L to R, bottom, then top row: T.J. Woodall, M.J. Kadlecik, and C.W. Schiefelbein; H. Tierney, AP pilot, LT G. Johnson, pilot, J. Watkins, G.A. Tupper, and P.P. Cavanaugh.)



A chocked Navy H-5 Dragonfly aboard LST-799 in 1952.

A H-5 Dragonfly helicopter belonging to HU-1 stands ready aboard the Japanese LST 0007, the back-up for U.S. Navy LST-799.



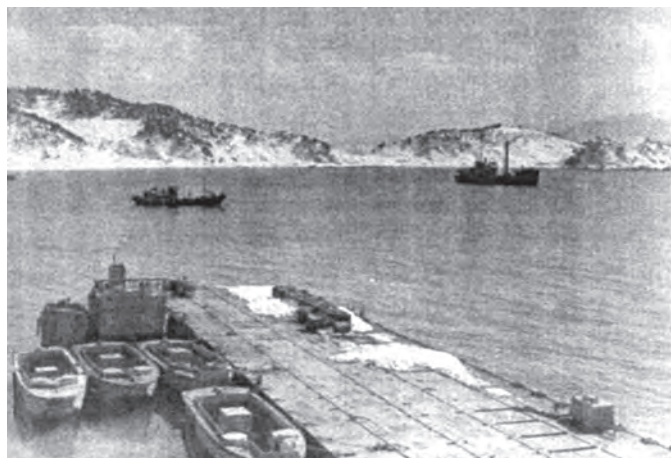




The leeward side of the Seabee-extended airstrip on Yo-do was a safe harbor for K-333 and K-444 trawlers (left) and Army Q-boats.



The extended runway on Yo-do paid for itself within days of completion. Seven F4U Corsairs, short on fuel, made emergency landings on 15 July 1952. After being refueled with hand pumps they returned to their aircraft carrier.



The pier of the 'Marina' was on the western (leeward) side of Yo-do, just below the Korean village. One of the CIA trawlers (K-333 or K-444) is moored offshore to the right.

- 5 Marion, *That Others May Live*, 21-22. The Air Force was the only service using fixed-wing amphibious aircraft to recover downed air crew. While the Navy had two flying boats in Korea, the Martin PBM *Mariners* and P5 *Marlins*, they were used for antisubmarine patrol, minesweeping operations, and escort missions.
- 6 *Air-Sea Rescue 1941-1952*, 160-161. Personnel strength in the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARS jumped from 88 officers and 381 airmen on 25 June 1950 to 133 officers and 623 airmen on 15 November 1950; eleven officers over Table of Organization and Equipment (T/O & E [7-1613]). The wartime high on 1 February 1952 was 1,028. Marion, *That Others May Live*, 3.
- 7 Marion, *That Others May Live*, 17.
- 8 CDRs Malcolm W. Cagle and Frank A. Manson, *The Sea War in Korea* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1957), 415-416.
- 9 Cagle and Manson, *The Sea War in Korea*, 425.

- 10 Cagle and Manson, *The Sea War in Korea*, 424.
- 11 Cagle and Manson, *The Sea War in Korea*, 427-430, 523; Steve Karoly, "Operation Crippled Chick: ACB 1 Builds Emergency Airstrip Behind Enemy Lines," at [http://www.seabeecook.com/history/Korea/crippled\\_chick.htm](http://www.seabeecook.com/history/Korea/crippled_chick.htm) accessed 3/18/2013; Karoly, "A Seabee's Impressions of Yo Do" at [http://www.seabeecook.com/history/Korea/Yo\\_do\\_impressions.htm](http://www.seabeecook.com/history/Korea/Yo_do_impressions.htm) accessed 3/18/2013..
- 12 Marion, *That Others May Live*, 17; MG Edward J. Timberlake, the Fifth Air Force commander, commended the EUSA Guerrilla Command for recovering several of his downed pilots. The Paengnyong-do guerrillas found the aircrews and turned them over to the American advisors who arranged return transport with 3<sup>rd</sup> RS. BG John H. McGee letter to COL Rod Paschall, 24 March 1986, 17-18. John Hugh McGee Papers, Box 38, Entry F7, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC), Carlisle Barracks, PA.





# JACK

## Operations & Activities

Korea, 1951 - 1953

by Charles H. Briscoe



In mid-April 1951 the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Japan formally consolidated its assets in Korea. The Office of Policy Coordination (OPC / covert operations) section and the Office of Special Operations (OSO / intelligence collection and espionage activities) group were united to form the first combined Clandestine Services field mission. Its cover name was JACK (Joint Advisory Commission, Korea).<sup>1</sup> The CIA role was already confusing to American military commands, but combining assets enabled the Agency to best provide intelligence to the Far East Command (FEC) and Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) until hostilities ended. As explained in “CIA Paramilitary Operations in Korea, 1950-1951,” all the U.S. military services, the British Royal Marine 41 Commando, the CIA, and Republic of Korea (ROK) military and civilian intelligence conducted special and intelligence operations during the war.

My purpose is to: correct, clarify, and expand “Soldier-Sailors in Korea: JACK Maritime Operations” published in 2006; emphasize realities of aircrew rescue operations; separate JACK Special Mission Group (SMG) activities (covert maritime operations) from US military special activities in 1951-1953; and reveal critical roles of Army, Navy, and USMC officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) detailed to the Agency.<sup>2</sup> The military veterans describe JACK paramilitary operations in Korea. While this article is centered on the last two years of the war, CIA internal compartmentation of intelligence operations and paramilitary activities meant that few personnel could explain JACK organization or the full scope of Agency missions in Korea.

The previous article, “CIA Paramilitary Operations in Korea, 1950-1951,” described how the effort to build an escape and evasion (E&E) overland corridor for UN airmen collapsed when guerrilla units dedicated to that mission were destroyed in the winter of 1951-52. During the war hundreds of Agency-trained guerrillas

and intelligence agents were inserted into North Korea by parachute and boat, never to return. The lack of CIA familiarity with Communist-imposed social controls meant that this practice continued throughout the war.<sup>3</sup>

Allied ‘deep’ behind the lines activities failed for many reasons. Guerrilla dependency on air resupply compromised base camp areas and facilitated systematic elimination by Communist security forces. Planned CIA command and control (C&C) island bases at each end of the E&E corridor never materialized. The ‘offshore safety net’ (coastal smuggling/fishing fleets to search for and recover downed airmen) failed because radios were not provided to Koreans. Hence, the CIA in Japan had no control over these contracted assets. Without American military advisors to insure discipline and mission focus, bored guerrilla leaders conducted unconventional warfare against targets of opportunity. But, guerrilla attacks on local infrastructure caused more work for the residents and limited support died. The peasants had to make the repairs and serve as village guardsmen. Continual guerrilla and agent losses did not deter JACK or UN-affiliated commands and agencies from sending more North Korean refugees behind enemy lines.

“Despite abysmal results, we had to continue trying. The very presence of guerrilla units behind the lines, regardless of how long they lasted, disrupted their lines of communication and harassed the North Korean military. Agents had to be inserted if tactical intelligence was to be collected. And, we [CIA] still had the covert E&E mission,” remarked then Major (MAJ) John K. ‘Jack’ Singlaub, chief of staff and deputy commander, JACK.<sup>4</sup> The aircraft ‘snatch recovery’ (personnel) system explained in “JACK Air Operations in Korea, 1951-1953” was another CIA attempt to satisfy its FEC E&E mission.

The *quid pro quo* for Agency independence was to establish a guerrilla-operated E&E corridor across North Korea, just south of the China border area (called ‘MiG



**“The very presence of guerrilla units behind the lines, regardless of how long they lasted, disrupted their lines of communication and harassed the North Korean military.” — MAJ Singlaub**

MAJ John K. ‘Jack’ Singlaub was the Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff of JACK, 1951-52.





Retired GEN Walter B. Smith, Director of Central Intelligence.

Alley'), to assist downed UN aircrews and to provide intelligence until the end of hostilities. Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) retired General (GEN) Walter Bedell 'Beetle' Smith satisfied the concerns of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington and GEN Douglas A. MacArthur in FEC by combining assets in Korea. Navy Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) and Marine raids on North Korean coastal infrastructure demonstrated how to harass the enemy, but the U.S. Navy ships in support broadcasted intentions and reduced effectiveness.

Covert coastal raiding by specially-trained guerrilla forces accompanied by American advisors included intelligence collection. While CIA motorized whaleboat (MWB) raiders were attacking Soviet sea mine storage sites in North Korea ("CIA Paramilitary Operations in Korea, 1950-1951"), Hans V. Tofte, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Europe veteran who headed OPC, had other ongoing projects.<sup>5</sup> His paramilitary operations chief, USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer, had realized the futility of conducting guerrilla operations deep behind enemy lines after his lack of success with an E&E corridor. Based on the success of Navy UDT/Marine coastal raids, the WWII Guadalcanal and U.S. Naval Group China veteran proposed creation of a standing CIA guerrilla force (Special Mission Group [SMG]) specifically for covert operations and intelligence collection. Concerns about compartmenting the SMG from the other guerrilla and agent training on Yong-do prompted Hans Tofte to establish a more isolated base on Kadok-do, a small island northeast of Koje-do and west-southwest of Pusan.<sup>6</sup>

In the interim, MAJ Kramer needed additional experienced military trainers/advisors to work with the thousand volunteers assembled at Yong-do. The old Japanese Army island camp was fairly secure because the entrance to the causeway linking it to the peninsula hooking around Pusan harbor was always guarded. He recruited Army Captain (CPT) Hilary H. 'Hunt' Crawford, Jr. (WWII OSS), Navy UDT-3 veteran, Lieutenant junior grade (LTJG) George C. Atcheson, III, Sergeant First Class (SFC) James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, F Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 187<sup>th</sup> Airborne Regimental Combat Team paratrooper who made both Korea combat jumps, and USMC First Lieutenant (1LT) Thomas L. Curtis (Amphibious Corps Scout-Observers



(L to R) Hans V. Tofte, director CIA paramilitary operations, Korea, ROK MAJ Han Chul-min, and USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer at Atsugi Airbase, Japan.



(L to R) USMC 1LT Thomas L. Curtis, UDT LTJG George C. Atcheson, III, and SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, JACK advisors to SMG on Yong-do.

and OSS Greece and China). Mr. Oh Pak, a former river pirate, was nominal 'first sergeant' of the South Korean and disaffected North Korean trainees. Since the SMG was to be a raiding force, marksmanship ranges had to be built beyond those used for weapon orientations.<sup>7</sup>

"Captain Hunt Crawford told me to build the ranges. We had to have a thousand-inch range to zero individual weapons and a two-hundred yard combat marksmanship range. I traded booze for Japanese pistols with the first sergeant of the 'ack ack' [anti-aircraft artillery (AAA)] battery on Yong-do. Those old weapons got me explosives and a bulldozer with operator from an engineer outfit. When our ranges were done, we built the AAA guys a first class volleyball court," chuckled SFC Pagnella. "Yong-do had been a Japanese Army base long before WWII. Surrounded by open water on three sides, our crew-served weapons [range] fans extended into the sea. We just had to watch for ships entering and leaving Pusan harbor."<sup>8</sup> Because the SMG would conduct ship-launched and supported raids, ambushes, prisoner snatches, and destroy North Korean coastal roads, bridges, and railway infrastructure, specialized training was arranged.<sup>9</sup>

Classes were assigned amongst the Americans according to ability and experience. UDT LT Atcheson conducted





Formation of CIA guerrilla trainees on Yong-do.



## SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella

- **Born** 27 November 1929, Rochester, NY
- **Enlisted** for parachute duty, 1948
- **BCT** Fort Dix, NJ
- **Airborne/Glider training**, Fort Benning, GA, March 1949
- **F Company, 2/187<sup>th</sup> PIR**, 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, KY
- **Weapons NCO Course**, Fort Benning, GA, January 1950
- **187<sup>th</sup> ARCT** shipped to Japan, August 1950, then airlifted to Korea, September 1950
- **Sunchon/Sukchon** combat jump, 20 October 1950
- **Munsan-ni** combat jump, 23 March 1951, WIA
- **PFC to SFC** with F Co, 187<sup>th</sup> ARCT
- **JACK** detail, November 1951-December 1952
- **CIA** detail in Virginia, 1953-1958<sup>10</sup>



Mr. Oh Pak, a former river pirate, was the nominal 'first sergeant' of the JACK SMG raiders.



SMG trainees learn assembly and disassembly of Browning Automatic Rifles (BAR) under U.S. supervision on Yong-do.

rubber boat, amphibious raids, and demolitions training, and provided scout swimmer instruction. SFC Pagnella was the primary weapons instructor for everything from hand grenades, mines and booby traps to the .30 cal. M-1 Garand rifle and M-2 carbine, .45 cal. M-3 sub-machine gun, 30.06 cal. Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), .30 cal. light and .50 cal. heavy machine guns, 60mm mortar, and 57mm antitank (AT) recoilless rifle. Marine 1LT Curtis taught .45 cal. pistol combat (OSS 'instinctive') shooting, hand-to-hand combat, and guerrilla warfare tactics. Chinese and Russian weapons, first aid, map reading, patrolling, and ambush techniques rounded out the classes. MAJs Kramer and Han Chul-min, the ROK Army intelligence officer, jointly supervised the SMG training.<sup>11</sup> The U.S. Navy supported maritime training until the Agency could acquire some commercial vessels.

The primary SMG delivery vessels were to be U.S. Navy destroyer transports (APD) with their four 36-foot LCPR (landing craft personnel, ramped) or LCV (landing craft vehicle, personnel) that were designed to support Marine Raiders and UDT in the Pacific during WWII. Three of the four APDs that served in Korea, the *Horace A. Bass* (APD-124), *Wantuck* (APD-125), and *Begor* (APD-127) supported JACK. Several thousand yards offshore the LCPRs or LCVs would be launched at night to tow guerrilla-laden rubber boats (RB-10) about 500 yards from shore. Scout swimmers would reconnoiter the beach landing site before



signaling the boats to come ashore.<sup>12</sup> LT Atcheson tested the viability of the SMG concept early in training.

Late on the night of 25 January 1952, LT Atcheson led a 45-man guerrilla raiding party to destroy a railway bridge. Shortly after emplacing the explosive charges, Atcheson spotted a fifteen man enemy patrol approaching. He directed naval gunfire so skillfully that fourteen of the enemy soldiers were killed and one was captured. Then, the UDT-3 veteran calmly supervised the placing of detonators on the time cord, activated the fuses, and led his men and the prisoner back to the beached rubber boats to paddle out to a loitering LCPR. As the group was being

towed to the APD, the explosive charges erupted with a great roar. At daylight, a derailed locomotive at the bridge site was rendered useless by naval gunfire.<sup>13</sup> Afterwards, training was compressed to conduct the first 'full-up' SMG mission from the *Wantuck* (APD-125) on 21 March 1952.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, 1LT Curtis and two newly assigned airborne sergeants, Master Sergeant (MSG) Walter Hoffman and Sergeant (SGT) Thomas G. Fosmire, had been working to establish the new training base on Kadok-do.

SGT Tom Fosmire, Reconnaissance Company, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC, had to reenlist to get to Korea. He wanted a Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) like his brother, Chuck, had earned in the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Europe. Military service was a family tradition. Their father, gassed in WWI, wore the German bullet that wounded him as a tie clasp.<sup>15</sup>

Casualties in Korea were heavy the winter of 1951-52 and SGT Fosmire felt certain that he would get a combat infantry assignment. But, he was surprised and irritated when ordered to the Far East Air Forces Technical Analysis Group (FEAF/TAG) headquarters in Tokyo. When he complained about this diversion from combat, the EUSA replacement company commander advised, "You ought to take the assignment. But if you come back, I will definitely send you to Korea as an infantryman."<sup>16</sup>

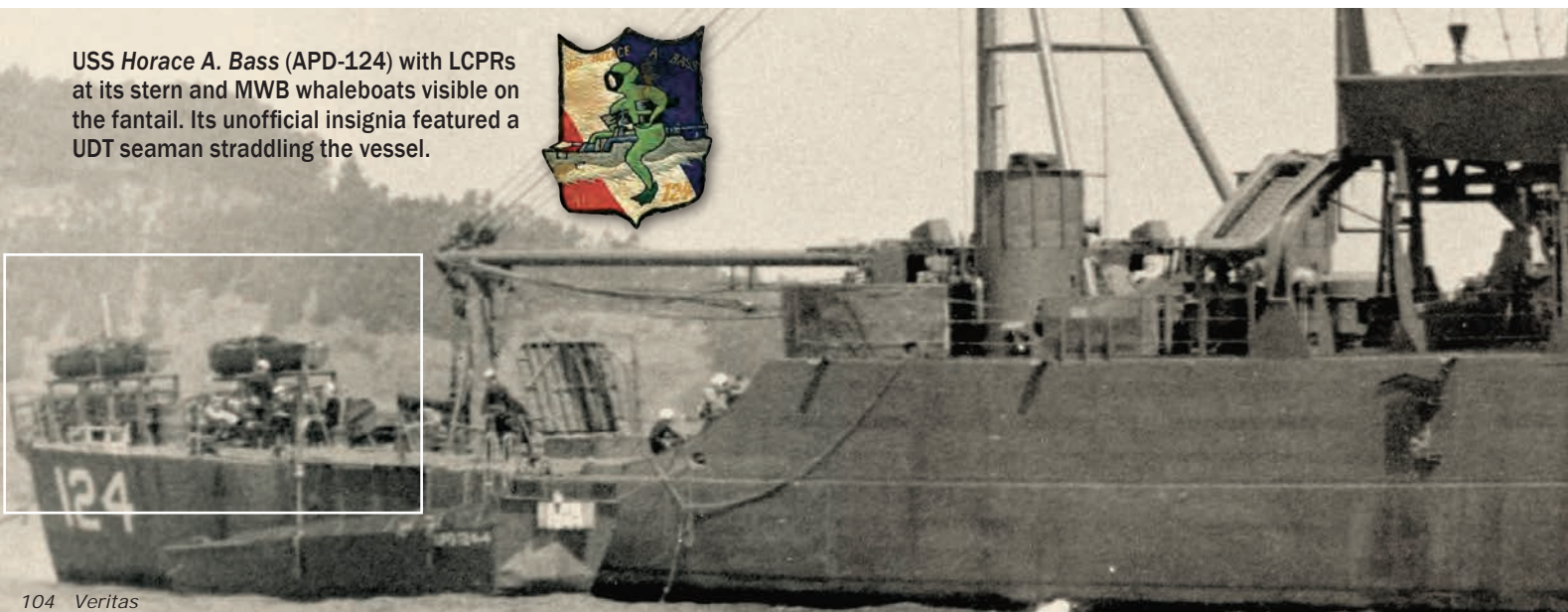
Fosmire shouldered his duffle bag and got on the bus to Tokyo. The FEAF/TAG (CIA cover) office was in the old NYK Shipping Company up the street from the *Dai'ichi* building, FEC headquarters. As SGT Fosmire entered the lobby he was amazed to see American women at work. "An Army first sergeant [1SG] wearing every valor decoration except the Medal of Honor administered a battery of aptitude tests to me. Then, after checking my scores, he told me that I was being assigned to JACK. I was to catch the bus to Atsugi Airbase (outside of Tokyo). There, a *Civil Air Transport* twin-engine C-46 *Commando* would take me to Pusan," recalled the airborne sergeant.<sup>17</sup>

"A jeep was waiting when we landed. The driver took me to an old Japanese hotel in Tongnae, a spa village just outside Pusan. Instead of sleeping in a pup tent like most



USMC MAJ Vincent R. "Dutch" Kramer observes SMG rubber boat insertion training with U.S. Navy.

USS *Horace A. Bass* (APD-124) with LCPRs at its stern and MWB whaleboats visible on the fantail. Its unofficial insignia featured a UDT seaman straddling the vessel.





**“An Army first sergeant wearing every valor decoration except the Medal of Honor administered a battery of aptitude tests to me. Then, after checking my scores, he told me that I was being assigned to JACK. — SGT Fosmire**

infantrymen in Korea, I was assigned a bunk bed in a hotel room. This was the field headquarters for JACK. It had a central hot bath and a very nice mess hall. While checking around, I discovered that there were Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force personnel assigned and most were WWII veterans,” remembered SGT Fosmire.<sup>18</sup>

The military officers detailed to JACK paramilitary operations brought a wealth of combat experience. Amphibious Corps Scout-Observers, U.S. Naval Group China, and OSS hands included Marine Lieutenant Colonels (LTC) William A. “Rip” Robertson, Jr. and Tucker P.E.P. Gougelmann, MAJ “Dutch” Kramer, 1LT Tom Curtis, Army MAJ John K. ‘Jack’ Singlaub (OSS France and China and CIA Mukden) and CPT Hilary H. ‘Hunt’ Crawford (OSS). Colonel (COL) Benjamin H. Vandervoort, the legendary 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 505<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment commander (82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division) of France and Holland, and CPT John F. ‘Skip’ Sadler, 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne, the Philippines, were the paratrooper vets. UDT-3 Lieutenant George Atcheson, frocked Army CPT Robert C. Kingston, and USAF MAJ Jack Nabors, and USAF Second Lieutenant (2LT) John W. MacDonald were the Korean War veterans. COL Vandervoort succeeded Hans V. Tofte.<sup>19</sup> The officers assigned to intelligence collection were just the opposite.

Junior intelligence officers were the weakest link. Straight from Ivy League colleges, the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) second lieutenants were given three months of basic paramilitary skills and parachute training at Fort Benning, GA (Training Center One).<sup>20</sup> “These inexperienced OSO case officers [agent handlers] had just enough training to be dangerous,” commented CPT ‘Skip’ Sadler.<sup>21</sup> A CIA history stated: “Quite frankly, with the exception of hard core cadre, green and untried case officers were substituted for qualified, experienced officers because the latter were in short supply.”<sup>22</sup> “An exception was Nestor D. Sanchez who became a career CIA case officer and chief of the Latin American Division,” said MAJ Singlaub.<sup>23</sup> Military officers and NCOs detailed to JACK paramilitary operations were appropriately paired.

For field operations the CIA teamed a select cadre of strong, experienced sergeants with seasoned officers. These Americans trained and advised the indigenous



CPL Oscar ‘Pete’ Johnson, Jr., JACK parachute rigger, and SGT Thomas G. ‘Tom’ Fosmire, JACK Maritime, collect supplies for K-333 at the British Exchange in Pusan, before returning to Yo-do.



The NYK Shipping Company building, facing the Imperial moat, housed the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section until deactivation in late 1948. It was up the street from the *Dai-ichi* building which served as the Far East Command (FEC) headquarters of General Douglas A. MacArthur.



The Hotel Traymore in Seoul served as JACK headquarters.



operational elements of JACK. “COL Vandervoort knew first-hand the value of paratroop NCOs,” commented SGT Fosmire. “In lieu of any specific preparatory training most sergeants were sent to guerrilla and intelligence agent camps to assist in training volunteers.”<sup>24</sup> Operational demands dictated OJT (on-the-job-training) for most.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, newly-arrived SGT Fosmire and MSG Walter Hoffman were assigned to one of the most senior lieutenants in the Marine Corps, 1LT Tom Curtis. This ‘mustang’ officer (enlisted to warrant to battlefield commission) was a highly-decorated veteran from Atlantic Fleet Scout–Observer Group and OSS in Greece and China.<sup>26</sup> The three men were sent down to Kadok-do to build a thousand-inch zero range and small arms, machine gun, and crew-served ranges (57mm recoilless rifle and 60mm mortar). They also were to train a thirty-man guerrilla cadre in marksmanship (American, Chinese, and Russian weapons), hand grenades, mines, and booby traps, first aid, and map reading. Small unit infantry tactics emphasized raids and ambushes. Seventy more guerrillas training at the CIA site on Saipan were slated to join them. Barracks were added to the construction schedule.<sup>27</sup>

A thirty-ton motorized Chinese *junk* delivered supplies, foodstuffs, and munitions weekly. It was large enough to carry an Army jeep to the island. However, the strong currents and prevailing westerly winds made the resupply trips to and from Pusan miserable two-day affairs. Since the three Americans alternated this duty, 1LT Curtis was able to stay abreast of SMG activities on Yong-do.<sup>28</sup> What Sergeants Hoffman and Fosmire did not realize was that they were providing orientations to personnel slated for the SMG and did the ‘grunt’ work for a training base that would be discarded by JACK.

The first two SMG missions with a ‘full up’ unit proved disappointing. On 21 March 1952, the CIA guerrilla raiders launched from the *Wantuck* to ambush a North Korean truck convoy. They were to capture some drivers and identify the cargo. After a perfect insertion and undetected movement into ambush and security positions, no enemy vehicles appeared. The withdrawal went smoothly, but the guerrillas were disgruntled. A few days later rough seas and high surf prevented the execution of a rail destruction mission. A frustrated MAJ Kramer, bobbing in an LCPV offshore, allowed SFC



**“Quite frankly, with the exception of hard core cadre, green and untried case officers were substituted for qualified, experienced officers because the latter were in short supply.” — CPT Sadler**

CPT John F. ‘Skip’ Sadler, JACK Air chief, was an 11th Airborne Division combat paratrooper.



(L) BG James M. Gavin, CG, 82nd Airborne Division, and (R) MAJ Benjamin H. Vandervoort, of the legendary 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment (France and Holland) were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for their valorous actions during the Normandy invasion. It was COL Vandervoort who replaced Hans V. Tofte in Korea.



USMC LTC William A. ‘Rip’ Robertson replaced MAJ John K. ‘Jack’ Singlaub as JACK chief of staff.



Nestor D. Sanchez, recruited from New Mexico Military Institute (1950), was a JACK case officer.





JACK advisors (L to R), SFC James C. 'Joe' Pagnella, Navy UDT LT George C. Atcheson, III, MAJ John K. 'Jack' Singlaub, USMC 1LT Thomas L. Curtis, and USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer observe SMG rubber raft training.



1LT Tom Curtis (L) and MSG Walter Hoffman (R) with Korean crew aboard K-333.

Pagnella to fire several 57mm high explosive rounds at a candlelit defensive bunker 600 yards north of the landing site. Secondary explosions provided some consolation.<sup>29</sup> Then, the SMG with its principal advisors, MAJ Kramer, LT Atcheson and SFC Pagnella, returned to Yong-do where more training was conducted. Coincidentally, the Americans on the Kadok-do project returned to Tongnae for a weekend R&R (rest & relaxation) after being isolated for almost three months.

That very short respite at headquarters landed 1LT Curtis, MSG Hoffman, and SGT Fosmire in JACK maritime operations. After a night of hard drinking, the mustang lieutenant decided that a prank would 'loosen up' a few 'stiff-backed' JACK officers. He used a fire extinguisher to wake them. The next morning 1LT Curtis was 'standing before the mast' in COL Vandervoort's office. Fortunately, the two senior Marines available—LTC 'Rip' Robertson, a fellow Atlantic Fleet Scout—Observer, and MAJ 'Dutch' Kramer, a kindred China man—spoke up in his behalf. They suggested that Curtis, instead of being immediately reassigned, be sent to command a trawler that had been purchased to cover the aircrew recovery mission off the northeast coast of Korea.<sup>30</sup>

An 85-foot Japanese-built trawler, K-333, crewed by Koreans, would be the first JACK vessel to operate from Yo-do (island) at the mouth of Wonsan harbor. The WWII OSS officer accepted conditionally; both MSG Hoffman and SGT Fosmire had to volunteer to join him. The two paratroopers agreed and the three became seamen aboard a 1940s, diesel-powered, 80-ton fishing trawler that would rescue downed UN airmen and conduct covert insertions along the northeast coast of Korea.<sup>31</sup>

K-333 and its 12-man Korean crew were berthed at Pusan while shipboard modifications were being made. Interior compartments had to accommodate forty passengers. Hidden crew-served weapons mounts had to be installed and the radio antennas concealed. Capable of a top speed of twelve knots (twelve nautical miles per hour) and a cruising speed of eight to ten knots, the modified trawler K-333 had four hatch-covered foredeck holds to accommodate forty guerrilla raiders. Light machine gun mounts (.30 caliber) were placed on both sides of the forward hold section and a .50 caliber heavy machine gun station was installed at the back of the captain's cockpit (wheelhouse).<sup>32</sup> The antennas were hidden in the masts and cranes so as not to attract attention from a distance.<sup>33</sup> K-333 was to be a 1950s version of the WWI and WWII Q-boats, armed Q-boats vessels disguised as merchant ships.

The Japanese trawler became home for Sergeants Fosmire and Hoffman. They collected the individual and crew-served weapons, supervised the fabrication and installation of armor-shielded machine gun mounts, and accumulated ammunition to test fire everything. 1LT Curtis signed for liquor and cigarettes, both of which were used to pay the crew and to barter for food and supplies only available on the black market. After several multi-day shakedown cruises well beyond Pusan harbor, the K-333 team received orders.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile, a more experienced SMG resumed raid and intelligence missions along the northeast coast, well north of Wonsan.





JACK Maritime trawler K 444, sister ship of K 333, berthed at Pusan.



MSG Walter Hoffman (far left rear in Army sweater and soft cap) with both Korean trawler crews aboard K-444.

On 21 April 1952, the *Horace A. Bass* (APD-124) supported an operation to capture rail workers to get the latest information on identification (ID) cards. The North Koreans regularly changed ID paper colors and stamps. The secondary mission of the SMG was to destroy a railway bridge or tunnel where the railroad hugged shallow coastal beaches at the base of rugged mountains.

These were dangerous targets because there were no harbors or inlets and riptides were common. Most railroad targets were near fishing villages where manpower was conscripted to repair damage from bombs and naval gunfire. With the Red Chinese entrenched along the main line of resistance, North Korea had tightened up internal security and critical infrastructure protection.<sup>35</sup>

The SMG discovered this the hard way. An enemy beach patrol spotted and engaged the three scout swimmers. Despite heavy covering fire from the .30 cal. machine guns on the LCPR during UDT LT Atcheson's recovery effort, the SMG lost three guerrillas. The biggest loss was their primary interpreter, Chon Do-hyun ('John Chun').<sup>36</sup>

Nine days later the SMG raiders acquitted themselves well using their 57mm recoilless rifles. The gunners trained by SFC Pagnella hit a locomotive, but it escaped destruction by quickly backing into a tunnel. The demolitions team blew up a railway bridge and captured three North Korean civilians.<sup>37</sup> About the same time, K-333 was headed northeast to Yo-do.

Many UN forces were based on the largest island in Wonsan harbor. Garrisoned by ROK Marines, Yo-do had been used as a special operations base by the British Royal Marine 41 Commando, Marine/Navy Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) teams, and ROK Army special intelligence units since late summer





The primary SMG interpreter sighting the 57mm recoilless rifle, Chon Do-hyun, 'John Chun,' was killed in action on 21 April 1952.

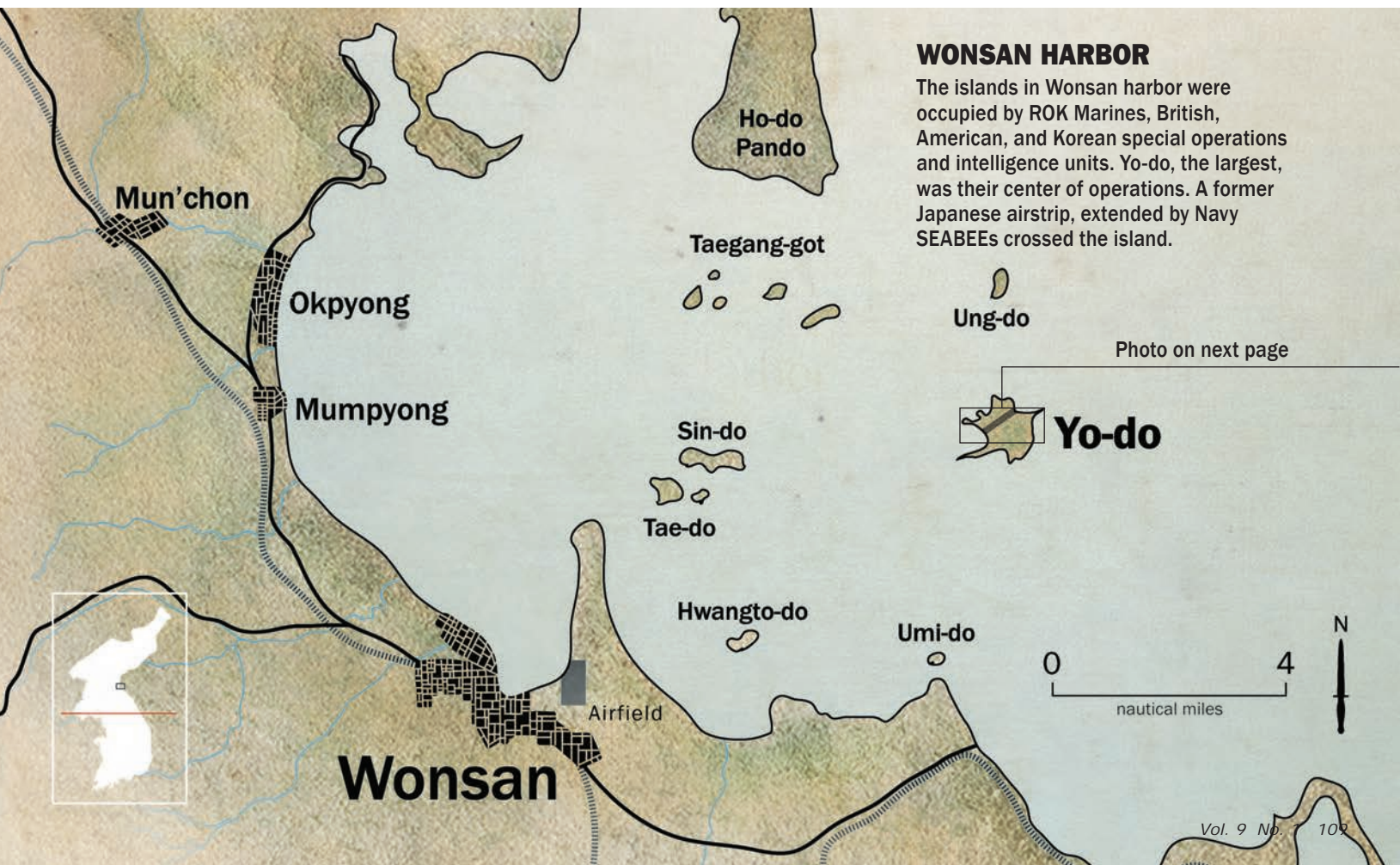


CIA Korean SMG aboard U.S. Navy ship for raid mission.

1950. The CIA and ROK Army began using the island in early 1951 as an agent training base and launch site for intelligence operatives and raiding forces.<sup>38</sup> The Far East Air Forces (FEAF) 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Rescue Squadron (RS) kept an H-5 Sikorsky helicopter detachment on the island to recover downed UN pilots. The old Japanese airstrip was extended by Navy Seabees to handle Beechcraft C-45 *Expeditors*, C-46 *Commandos*, C-47 *Skytrains*, and emergency landings of carrier-based propeller aircraft.<sup>39</sup> Yo-do was a natural base location for K-333.

Although several hundred ROK Marines guarded Yo-do and the surrounding islands, the Americans and Korean

crew slept aboard the CIA trawler at night. They only ate meals ashore in the heavily sandbagged messhall.<sup>40</sup> This was a wise precaution because the offshore islands and UN minesweepers and blockade ships were targeted daily by the North Korean shore batteries ringing Wonsan harbor. These coastal batteries ranged from heavy mortars to 155mm howitzers. Exchanges varied from single harassment rounds to barrages of more than a hundred rounds. The ships counter-fired during the day when Marine and Navy spotter teams on the harbor islands identified shore targets. Thus, destroyers, minesweepers, and UN personnel stationed on the islands were hit daily by artillery resulting





in deaths, injuries, and damaged vessels, especially after the Soviets provided radar-controlled fire direction systems.<sup>41</sup>

The mission of the K-333 trawler team was to rescue downed UN airmen, surreptitiously land and extract JACK intelligence agents, support SMG coastal raids, and direct naval gunfire against targets of opportunity along the coast from Wonsan to the Tumen River.<sup>42</sup> Though the SMG continued to use Navy APDs, K-333 with its non-military signature could come closer to shore. Still, its primary function was to plug holes in a nonexistent JACK aircrew recovery net.<sup>43</sup> At night, they regularly put agents over the side into “wiggle boat” fishing *sampans* coordinated by ROK intelligence units on Yo-do.<sup>44</sup> The South Koreans simply emulated the small boat agent insertions done by North Korea since before the war.

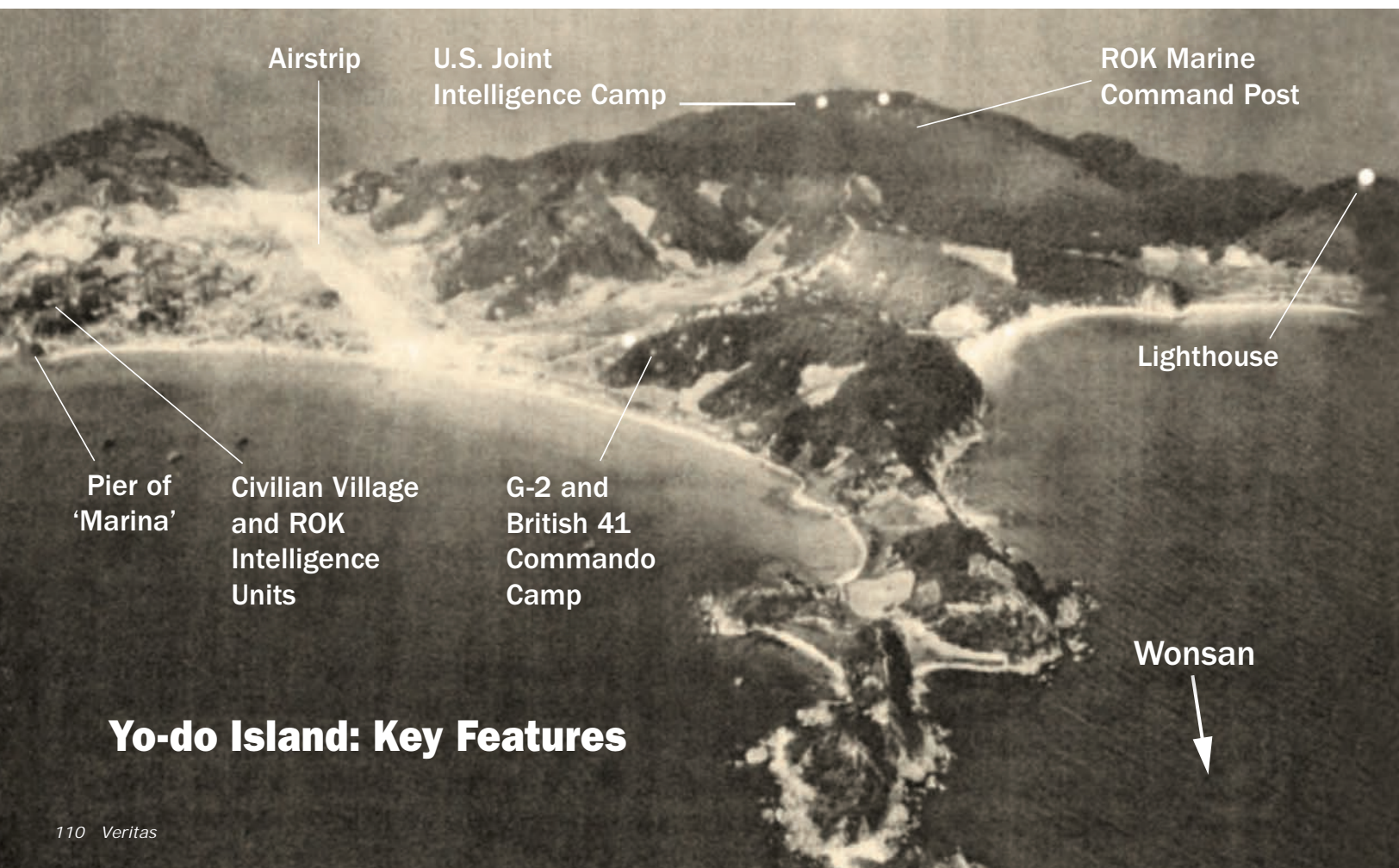
Confronted by heavy losses of agents infiltrating enemy lines overland (‘line crossers’) in late 1950, the EUSA guerrilla command Tactical Liaison Office (TLO) started copying the South Korean use of small indigenous craft to insert agents along the West coast. The 441<sup>st</sup> Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) espionage operation, SALAMANDER, contracted fishing *junks* and *sampans* to put agents deep into North Korea, initially from West coast islands above the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel that were occupied by anti-Communist North Korean guerrillas. In early 1951, the 441<sup>st</sup> CIC moved north from Paengyong-do to Cho-do to be closer to the Yalu River estuary. An East coast SALAMANDER base was established on Yo-do in the summer of 1951 so that their agents could infiltrate one coast and exfiltrate via the other. In addition to

increasing the special warfare population on Yo-do, the 441<sup>st</sup> introduced fast American sea craft to compensate for size, speed, and limited deep sea-worthiness of native fishing boats.<sup>45</sup> It was easy for K-333 to blend in with the various ‘commercial’ vessels using the Yo-do ‘marina.’

Numerous U.S. military officers and sergeants ‘served’ in JACK, yet few knew about the other paramilitary and intelligence activities. Each mission was compartmented on a ‘need to know’ basis. It was the same in EUSA guerrilla command. Yet, at the tactical level, limited maritime and air assets had to serve everyone and therein was a tenuous connection.

“Since air and sea assets were shared by a ‘whole blizzard of organizations involved with special operations, the lines of command and coordination were blurry,’” recalled 1LT Daniel C. Helix, FEC Liaison Detachment (FEC/LD), Sasebo Naval Base, Japan. “The boats on my books were used by a variety of elements in Korea. I arranged engine repairs, overhauls, modifications, and new vessel purchases. I also provided pay for the Korean crews. ‘Deals with the CIA’ were concocted aboard the USS *Dixie* (AD-14) at levels way above my pay grade. That Seventh Fleet destroyer tender served as the C&C vessel for the Navy East coast blockade.”<sup>46</sup> (see “Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRAK)” and “The CCRAK Navy” articles in this issue).

JACK elements capitalized on CCRAK maritime assets ‘carried on’ the FEC/LD property books. It was simple because those assets were ‘controlled’ by a dysfunctional headquarters. Military compartmentation enabled JACK







The Seventh Fleet destroyer tender USS *Dixie* (AD-14), the command and control vessel for the East coast blockade, had secure facilities for classified special operations meetings.



Yo-do 'marina' harbored a number of CCRAK Q-boats.



CCRAK Q-boat leaves U.S. Navy blockade vessel after coordinating upcoming special operation.

**“When we turned to face the lights and appropriately respond to the challenge, I realized that virtually every gun on the ship was trained on us.” — SGT Fosmire**

to hide its operations among theirs. “CCRAK never ‘broke the code,’ or chose to ignore it,” said MAJ ‘Jack’ Singlaub. “My old friend from OSS Jedburgh and China days, LTC [Benton M.] ‘Mac’ Austin was the CCRAK liaison for JACK and FEC/LD. We talked often to keep ‘feathers from getting ruffled.’”<sup>47</sup> By mid-1951, however, the static combat situation hampered paramilitary operations and limited intelligence collection in Korea.

Neither the U.S. military, the UN, JACK, nor the South Koreans factored how tightly the Communists controlled their populations. When Armistice talks began in the spring of 1951, the front lines between conventional forces became semi-fixed.<sup>48</sup> The floods of refugees that fled the fluid battlefield in 1950 and early 1951 became trickles as fortified trench lines began to separate the opposing forces. With Chinese troops manning key terrain along the front, the North Korean military ‘locked down’ internal security, especially along the coasts.

This was the environment in which LT Curtis and Sergeants Hoffman and Fosmire operated. It was very hostile and despite the conglomeration of special operations assets working from Yo-do, there was no

coordinated UN effort. Blockade ships ordered to reduce North Korean mine carrying *sampan* infiltrations occasionally sank boats containing friendly agent teams.<sup>49</sup> Still, the JACK added a second trawler (K-444) to the Wonsan operation. By typhoon season, MAJ ‘Dutch’ Kramer had rotated home and CPT Robert Kingston had taken his place at Yong-do.<sup>50</sup>

Typhoons regularly hit Korea and Japan in the summer. In June 1952, Typhoon Dinah severely curtailed air operations and forced the UN blockade ships to seek safe harbor for nearly ten days. UN ground forces had only artillery to counter enemy attacks. “Sheltered in a small cove of Yo-do, we had all three anchors out and kept the engine of K-333 running ‘slow forward’ for thirty-six hours to keep from being driven ashore. Every time the stern scraped bottom we’d ‘rev up’ the engine to pull away. It was a hairy time,” remembered SGT Fosmire.<sup>51</sup> Operating inside the UN naval blockade line posed other problems.

Not being recognized as a friendly by UN air and naval vessels was a constant danger. Visual signals identifying the two JACK trawlers as ‘friendly’ vessels changed monthly. Simple signals supported the commercial



# Q-ships to Q-boats

American merchant sea raiding dates to the Revolution. These commercial predators (privateers) were granted official 'letters of marque' to attack and seize ships flying flags of hostile countries. 'Prizes' (cargoes and vessels) were sold. The governments and the sailors shared the money. Prize income was a considerable boost to seaman wages.

Armed commercial vessels slipped through the Federal Navy blockades of Southern seaports during the Civil War. The money-driven 'blockade runners' actually complemented Confederate Navy commercial raiders that attacked shipping bound for Union ports. Both used speed to escape heavily-armed, often iron-clad warships that patrolled popular shipping lanes. Steam power and the evolving technology of the Industrial Revolution brought major changes to overseas commerce and imperial navies.

As the end of the 19th century approached steam-powered, iron-hulled vessels replaced 'clipper' sailing ships whose international sea routes were determined by vagaries of the wind. Strategically placed coaling stations and communications (radio and transoceanic telegraph cables) led to reliable ship scheduling, a key to transporting perishable cargo. Heavily armored, huge steel battleships armed with monster cannons to combat surface fighting ships represented the 'Age of Ironclads.' Natural physics and money determined size and numbers while navies experimented with subsurface 'equalizers.'

The submarine, introduced before WWI, revolutionized naval warfare. 'Gentleman rules' were applied to noncombatant merchant vessels (surface attacks with deck guns to compel crews into abandoning ship) early in the war. This tactic led the British to employ decoy merchantmen,

(Q-ships) to ambush submarines that surfaced. After several German U-boats were surprised and sunk underwater attacks became the norm. Q-ship losses mounted as tactics changed. Still, both sides employed them in a cavalier fashion throughout the war, despite lackluster results.

Germany sidestepped postwar restrictions on surface warships by building more submarines and developing fast 'pocket' battleships (heavy cruisers with battleship guns) during the interwar period. The combination of German U-boat 'wolfpack' attacks on transoceanic convoys, the pocket and Bismarck-class battleships, and Axis commerce raiders (Q-ships) devastated Allied shipping in the early years of WWII. Disregarding previous experience Allied nations responded in kind, but accomplished even less than in WWI.

So, why was this concept resurrected by special ops elements in Korea and why was it viable then? Agent drop-offs and pick-ups along the coast were the most successful means of insertion and recovery. UN naval forces dominated the waters around the peninsula. Air (limited transport assets in theater) and ground resupply (unsecure road systems) of the widely dispersed friendly guerrilla forces was not viable. JACK (Joint Advisory Commission, Korea), Eighth U.S. Army, and CCRAK (Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities, Korea) acquired 'civilian' boats and armed them. These 'Q-boats' hugged the coastline enjoying the protection of Navy blockade ships. They delivered cargos weekly that ranged from trucks and Quonset huts to tons of rice. While the Q-boats did support agent and raid missions, most of their work was resupply. Though captained by U.S. personnel they were not purchased or leased to attack North Korean maritime commerce.

On 15 August 1915 the disguised fishing Smack *Inverlyon* (similar to the pictured *Brightling Sea* above) sank UB-4 with gunfire about thirty-five miles from Lowestoft. The Royal Navy and civilian crew split a bounty paid by the Admiralty. After its short career as a Q-ship, the *Inverlyon*, fishing fifteen miles from Trevose Head, was shelled and sunk by U-55 on 1 February 1917.



The Q-ship, (HMS) SS *Cape Howe*, its hold filled with balsa wood, sank slowly south of Iceland on 21 June 1940 after being hit by two torpedoes fired from U-28. Seventy officers and seamen perished.



USS *Atik* (AK 101)/SS *Carolyn* was sunk 300 miles east of Norfolk, VA by U-123 on the fourth day of its shakedown cruise, 27 March 1942. Six officers and 135 enlisted sailors were lost.



'fishing trawler' cover. They ranged from flying three rice sacks to hanging two glass-ball fishing floats on the mast during daylight to using colored identification lights and flares to respond to night challenges. Since the two trawlers regularly hugged the coast at night to observe enemy activity (truck convoys or steam locomotives sneaking out of tunnels), to offload and recover SMG raiding parties, and to slip agents aboard *sampans*, the two JACK vessels naturally raised the suspicions of radar men on blockade vessels paranoid about enemy *sampans* carrying mines.<sup>52</sup> (See "CIA Paramilitary Operations, 1950-1951" in this issue).

The CIA trawlers were challenged regularly. In dark-of-the-moon nights, blockade destroyers on 'flycatcher' patrol (searching for North Korean mine-carrying *sampans*) would slip in quietly and 'light them up' with all searchlights. "A 'light up' was brighter than a Hollywood set," said SGT Fosmire. "When we turned to face the lights and appropriately respond to the challenge, I realized that virtually every gun on the ship was trained on us."<sup>53</sup> Even when recognized as friendly, Fosmire was often ordered to turn seaward ninety degrees and go to the five-mile

limit. If they were idling, awaiting the return of a SMG raiding party, the JACK guerrillas had a long paddle in store while K-333 or K-444 responded to directives. After the 'flycatcher' vessel left the area, the trawler would slip back in for the rubber boat pickup.<sup>54</sup> The following actions illustrate a few JACK SMG coastal operations.

The mission to capture a group of Russian officers meeting with North Korean military leaders near Dok-jin-ri (North Hamgyong) was assigned in mid-October 1952. Instead of using the trawlers (K-333 and K-444) to put the SMG force ashore, Lieutenant Curtis and Sergeants Hoffman and Fosmire were to assist LT Atcheson and SFC William Hanscombe (SFC Pagnella's replacement) aboard MW Bs, twenty-six-foot plywood motor launches used for general duty and as auxiliary lifeboats. The three-man East coast maritime team transloaded the SMG raiders from their trawlers to a destroyer escort (DE-699), the USS *Marsh*. This was done at night on 17 October 1952 on the seaward side of Yo-do to mask the transloading. When the empty trawlers returned to the other side of Yo-do to anchor, the *Marsh* slipped away to the north.<sup>55</sup>

Shortly after midnight 18 October 1952, the *Marsh* pinpointed the beach landing site with its radar and lowered two MWBs into the dark sea. Lines were tossed to each and the RB-10 rubber boats were slid over the side. Then, the SMG raiders climbed down cargo nets to board eight bobbing rubber craft. The two whaleboats, each towing four boats, tugged the SMG raiders 600 meters offshore, and then stood-by idling, to tow them back after the raid. LT Curtis and MSG Hoffman were teamed with LT Atcheson in the command whaleboat while SGT Fosmire accompanied SFC Hanscombe in the other. The *Marsh* had guided the MWBs ashore by relaying radar navigational vectors to the Navy coxswains wearing radio headsets.<sup>56</sup>

The scheduled meeting (according to the defector with them) was two miles inland in a village. The SMG was operating in the dark-of-the-moon, their preferred phase. The ingress went smoothly. Only the muffled engines and phosphorescent boat wakes signaled the movement of the attack force. After reaching shore safely, the scout swimmers reconnoitered the area. Then, using light sticks, they signaled "all clear."<sup>57</sup> The flank security and assault elements began paddling their RB-10s to shore.

As the beach security elements disembarked and ran crouched to their flank guard positions, the situation changed drastically. Both security teams began receiving effective small arms fire. When a heavy machine gun began firing tracers from the north, instead of "laying low," the SMG raiders, "itching for a fight," returned fire. With their positions identified in the darkness an intense firefight broke out.<sup>58</sup>

"By the time LT Atcheson fired his flare gun to signal an immediate withdrawal, several rubber boats had been hit. As the firing increased and the machine gun tracers moved closer to the beach landing site, both whaleboats headed in to grab the RB-10 tow lines. We got in first and grabbed four rubber boat lines. As we turned to head back out with four boats in tow, I noticed that Atcheson's whaleboat was 'dead in the water.' Its propeller had become fouled in



Navy Cross recipient, USMC MAJ Vincent R. 'Dutch' Kramer, rotated to the States in the summer of 1952.



Korean SMG raiders on the fantail of the USS *Begor* (APD-127) before the 25 January 1952 raid.



some fishing nets. We swung alongside and I passed our towlines to Lieutenant Curtis. Then, under even heavier small arms fire, we turned about and raced back to the beach to collect the remaining RB-10s, two of which were partially deflated,” related SGT Fosmire.<sup>59</sup>

“In the confusion, neither coxswain radioed the *Marsh* for suppressive fires. Both seamen were intent on their tasks—steering or freeing their whaleboats. They were hell bent on breaking contact and getting out of small arms range,” said Fosmire. “In the time it took us to return, the remaining SMG raiders had gotten their wounded in the boats and cleared the shore. They were paddling frantically to get beyond small arms range. When we got to them, Hanscombe and I grabbed the tow lines and lashed them to our stern as the coxswain swung back out to sea. In the meantime, LT Atcheson’s coxswain had ‘cleared’ the propeller and was headed back to the *Marsh*,” said Fosmire. “The action didn’t last more than ten minutes . . . or so it seemed, but it was quite exciting.”<sup>60</sup>

While the wounded SMG raiders were treated in the sick bay, DE-699 steamed south to Yo-do. Fortunately, no one was killed. On the seaward side of the island the SMG transloaded aboard the two trawlers for the return trip to Yong-do. SGT Fosmire was decorated for his heroic actions.<sup>61</sup> Another SMG raid with the soldier-seamen using their trawlers was more successful.

The mission to ambush a convoy and capture some North Korean soldiers was the first solo operation for SGT Fosmire and MSG Hoffman after LT Curtis rotated to the States. Both airborne sergeants were aboard the K-333 as it slipped in close to a rocky section of the East coast to offload an SMG platoon in rubber boats.<sup>62</sup> The SMG raiders triggered their ambush by disabling the lead and trail vehicles of the convoy with 57mm anti-tank recoilless rifles.<sup>63</sup> A badly stunned North Korean lieutenant and several soldiers were quickly captured and hustled down to the rubber boats. They had to escape quickly before reinforcements arrived to investigate the heavy gunfire.<sup>64</sup>

With the SMG raiders and enemy prisoners stowed safely aboard the trawler, the K-333 crew fired their machine guns at the ambush site to cover the withdrawal. This served to prevent any patrolling UN blockade vessels from mistaking them for enemy. Afterward, the North Korean lieutenant brazenly climbed out of the hold to



The carrying capacity of the Navy twenty-six foot plywood Mark II motorized whale boat (MWB) was limited. The coxswain normally stood to steer the craft. It is easy to understand why the coxswains were eager to break contact and get beyond small arms range.

smoke a cigarette on deck. To remove any ideas that he might have had about being a VIP prisoner, MSG Hoffman knocked him down, grabbed him by his collar and belt and threw him headfirst into the hold, keeping the lieutenant’s fur-lined hat. It came in handy because the frigid cold was a constant in winter.<sup>65</sup>

Between the harsh weather and limited contact with UN naval vessels patrolling the coasts, life aboard the trawlers was tough, primitive, and dangerous for all hands—Korean and American. The engine room was the only warm place. Two weeks of below zero temperatures in the winter of 1952–1953 instantly turned sea spray to ice, coating everything. Crewman used sledgehammers constantly to prevent ice buildup on the all-iron vessels. The accumulated weight of ice topside could cause the boat to ‘turn turtle’ unexpectedly, trapping the crew inside or throwing them overboard into the freezing cold water.<sup>66</sup> Survival suits were things of the future.

Coordination sessions aboard Navy ships (arranging naval gunfire support and delivery of SMG elements) offered respite from the harsh daily routine. It gave American advisors an opportunity for a hot meal, shower, and sometimes, a change of clothes. Occasionally, a Navy H-5 Sikorsky helicopter would ferry them out to a ship. When time was an issue, the JACK resupply airplane



**“In the time it took us to return, the remaining SMG raiders had gotten their wounded in the boats and cleared the shore. They were paddling frantically to get beyond small arms range.” — SGT Fosmire**

SFC Thomas G. Fosmire



would drop clean uniforms, rations, fresh water, rice, and fuel on the Yo-do airstrip before heading off for additional missions.<sup>67</sup> Otherwise, JACK Maritime headquarters at Yong-do would 'piggyback' on an Army-owned/Navy-skipped civilian CCRAK vessel. At the tactical level U.S. and Korean leaders on the harbor island worked together.

In the spirit of cooperation the JACK trawlers at Yo-do assisted the Navy with a downed pilot recovery in Wonsan harbor. "An H-5 helicopter lifted a pilot from the wing of his Corsair without getting his shoes wet. We idled K-333 between the aircraft and shore to serve as a shield during the rescue. The nearby blockade ships were reluctant to do this because of the innumerable floating mines in the harbor," commented Fosmire.<sup>68</sup> Back at Yong-do Navy UDT LT Atcheson's replacement (CPT

Kingston) was anxious to get involved in paramilitary operations and field intelligence collection.

CPT Kingston coordinated to use whatever CCRAK, JACK, and U.S. Navy vessels were available to insert and retrieve intelligence agents and attack North Korean coastal infrastructure. Overloading Q-576, a well-armed 63-foot CCRAK patrol boat (plywood hull) at Sok-cho-ri, with twelve agents and an interpreter, Kingston proceeded two hundred miles north to Son Jin. "It took three attempts to get all agents ashore without being detected. After we had them ashore, we retired to our original rendezvous and waited for three days to pass before we returned to pick up the agents," said Chief Quartermaster (CQM) B.W. Collins, Navy skipper of Q-576.<sup>69</sup>

"The pick-up was a bit more trouble than putting them ashore. It took us four nights to complete the mission. As we were picking up the last two men a sentry on the beach spotted the men in a small boat and opened fire. We were about one hundred yards from them, so I ordered the gun crews to open fire on him. The sentry hit the dirt, and the two remaining agents came aboard safely. One agent had been hit in the arm, but it was only a flesh wound. We gave him first aid and headed south for Sok-cho-ri," related CQM Collins.<sup>70</sup>

Within days CPT Kingston had another operation arranged for Q-576 and both JACK trawlers. Using Q-576 as his command post, Kingston brought along two other

Blizzards and severe ice storms typified the winter of 1952-53 in Korea. Fire support for conventional and special operations was limited to artillery.





Army officers and a doctor. K-333 and K-444, carrying “thirty Tiger Killers” (SMG) each, rendezvoused with Q-576 forty miles south of Son-jin. The demolition target was a railway bridge that could be seen five miles away. At dark they secured five ten-man rubber boats astern the Q-576 for a tandem raft tow. “We loaded the rafts [RB-10s] with fifty ‘Tiger Killers’ and headed for shore. We encountered no difficulty in getting the men ashore because I had taken them within fifty yards of the beach before cutting them loose,” said Collins.<sup>71</sup>

“We managed to pick up all the men safely, and returned to the position where the other boats were waiting. There still had not been any explosion. The captain [Kingston] said that something must have gone wrong. He wanted to return and investigate. We moved back to a place about one hundred yards from the beach, and were in the process of putting the small boat in the water, when the explosion cut loose, the bridge flying into hundreds of pieces. We recovered our boat and got out of there as fast as the old boat would run,” explained Collins. “The big boys had given him [Kingston] too many slaps on the back. We didn’t need to take on the North Koreans by ourselves, but on occasion [with Kingston] I sure felt that we were.”<sup>72</sup> Not all JACK advisors were as aggressive and ‘hands on’ as the Army 7<sup>th</sup> ID veteran.

Back at Sok-cho-ri, Marine LTC William ‘Rip’ Robertson, MAJ Kramer’s replacement, was waiting to use Q-576 to put five intelligence agents ashore a mile from a North Korean seaport. To add to the excitement a squadron of enemy torpedo boats was based there.<sup>73</sup> This made coordination with the blockade command critical. The following night Q-576 trailed in the wake of a destroyer until it was five miles from the seaport. Then, CQM Collins was radar vectored to the beach landing site by the Navy vessel. The agents’ boat was cast off about a hundred meters offshore. After recovering its small boat Q-576 had moved about 2,000 yards away when the destroyer warned that it had “two pips on the radar scope.” One, moving twenty knots, was headed to intercept them.<sup>74</sup>

The destroyer suggested that Collins hide near a small island about a half mile to the south. “We could hear the motors from the other boat by then, and they were really moving along at a fast clip. I pulled around the west side of the island and waited. About ten minutes later, I was informed that the boat had proceeded on a southeasterly course trying to intercept me before we reached the UN patrol line and safety. I circled back north and headed out at full speed, which was about fifteen knots. As soon as I felt that we were clear enough to make a dash for safety, I changed to an easterly course,” said CQM Collins. “It was sufficient time to reach the patrol line.”<sup>75</sup> With the East coast CCRAK boats based at Sok-cho-ri, LTC Rip Robertson and CPT Kingston decided to move the SMG from the original Yong-do organizational site.

The Army combat infantryman had several reasons for establishing a new camp near the CCRAK boat base. “There was small dirt airstrip (K-50) just to the south with a pine grove right off the beach. A beached Canadian corvette could serve as a good training aid for



‘Frocked’ CPT Robert C. Kingston, the 7th ID task force commander ‘first to the Yalu’ in early November 1950, replaced Navy UDT LT Atcheson as the SMG advisor. GEN Kingston was the first commander of the U.S. Central Command.



USS Samuel N. Moore (DD-747).

demolitions and steel cutting [practice] with explosives. The South Koreans [SMG recruiters] had their military personnel office [at the entrance] on Yong-do. To get to the camp, you had to go through a leper colony. So, few people came to visit their relatives or our facility,” said CPT Kingston.<sup>76</sup> Still, the SMG had been around Pusan too long. Sok-cho-ri with its protected harbor could accommodate LSTs (Landing Ship, Tank) and large ocean going freighters. And, the snug harbor was the supply terminus for I Corps (American). It did not take long for Kingston to get a secure compound built by American combat engineers with the help of some CIA-supplied whiskey and .38 cal. snub-nosed pistols. It consisted of wooden-framed and floored U.S. Army winter hexagonal tents with squad heaters inside.<sup>77</sup> The new base was much farther north, closer to the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel.





SGT Thomas G. Foscire (left carrying reserve parachute), JACK Maritime Ops and SGT Donald F. Stephens (first behind Korean carrying main parachutes on A-frame), JACK Air Section, return to the assembly area after making a pay jump near Pusan in 1952.



Parachute training for the SMG raiders was very rudimentary.

CPT Kingston made naval gunfire support a constant for all SMG coastal raids. "One day we briefed the skipper [Commander (CDR) Everett Marsalis 'Easy' Glenn] of the USS [*Samuel N.*] *Moore*, [DD-747], who had been a prisoner of the Japs during World War II. What the destroyers on picket duty up North always wanted was to knock out a train running between the railroad tunnels. So, I told the skipper, 'Hell, we'll get you a train.' We took one of his gigs [MWB] and put a radio and some sailors in it. Then, we laid off the southern entrance of one of the many tunnels coming down the coast," said the infantry captain. "The locomotives got up speed inside the tunnel. When they broke out, you could catch the flash of the old steam engine's firebox. They ran without lights but you could also hear them. A few hours later a train came south and the destroyer opened fire with everything it had, a couple of 5-inch guns, I guess. There was a big explosion. When we got back, I thought the skipper was going to give me the ship," commented Kingston.<sup>78</sup>

"Reality was that we only operated during the dark of the moon phase. We had about a five-to-seven day period, at the most, in which we could really operate," said Kingston.<sup>79</sup> That left most of the month for training. But, with an Armistice pending, harassment missions were curtailed in the early spring of 1953. Fortunately, LTC 'Rip' Robertson provided a challenging diversion for the SMG.

The CIA maritime raiding force, like EUSA guerrilla command units, was to become airborne qualified. CPT Kingston requested parachutes, sufficient reserves to be rotated between aircraft loads ('sticks'), an airplane, and MSG Merry Christmas from JACK Air. The SMG was trucked over to K-50 in time to watch a C-46 *Commando* land with the requisite equipment, MSG Christmas, and LTC Robertson.<sup>80</sup>

The morning was spent doing rudimentary ground training. Wooden boards laid across fifty-five gallon fuel drums served as parachute landing fall (PLF) platforms.

A suspended parachute harness was used to demonstrate parachute turning maneuvers in the air, actions in the event of a mid-air collision with another jumper, and the proper 'prepare to land' riser 'slip into the wind' before impact. After lunch, the airborne trainees boarded the C-46 for some 'in the aircraft actions' (individual static line hook up, jump commands, and emergency procedures). Then, the SMG 'chuted up' and jumped. "In March [1953] the rice paddies along that part of the East coast were still frozen. We didn't have any [jump] refusals and didn't have any casualties. LTC Robertson got so excited that he said, '@#\$%! I might as well go too!' He followed me out of the aircraft on his first and only parachute jump," said CPT Kingston. "A bunch of kids with A-frames carried the parachutes to the assembly area after each drop."<sup>81</sup> In the meantime, personnel rotations had changed American supervisors on the CIA trawlers.

SFC Tom Foscire, the skipper of K-333, had accumulated enough points to rotate back to the States. But he agreed to another assignment despite the pending Armistice. 1LT Curtis and MSG Hoffman were long gone; two Agency civilians, Michael Nolan, former fullback for the Los Angeles *Rams*, and another had been assigned to the CIA trawlers at Yo-do.<sup>82</sup>

Foscire joined airborne SGT John Blake at the CIA training base on Saipan to give six weeks of paramilitary training to forty Chen-do Gyo, a radical religious group living in the mountains north of Wonsan harbor. They had originally been part of the defunct CIA E&E corridor for downed UN airmen. The Chen-do Gyo were vehemently anti-Communist and very nationalistic. They began fighting the Japanese in 1928, and the North Korean Communists in the late 1940s.<sup>83</sup> They also supported the 441<sup>st</sup> CIC East coast SALAMANDER operation.<sup>84</sup> The Chen-do Gyo were not guerrillas or mercenaries, but the armed wing of a very strong theocratic political movement intent on free government in a modern Korea.<sup>85</sup>



After their Saipan training, the Chen-do Gyo were moved to the former SMG camp south of Sok-cho-ri for advanced training (the CIA guerrilla unit had been disbanded and CPT Kingston reassigned to the 'line crosser' section). At Sok-cho-ri, the armed religious militants learned of the approaching ceasefire. They became very upset that they would not be able to retaliate against the North Korean military for abuses suffered by their people. One cold, rainy day they refused to train and began drinking. That night, SGT Blake had to wrench an M-2 carbine from a drunken Chen-do Gyo intent on killing Fosmire. That incident convinced the Milwaukee native that it was time to return to the U.S. Army and go home.<sup>86</sup> SFC Fosmire was one of many American soldiers who realized the futility of trying to motivate guerrillas with a cease-fire pending. The Armistice negotiation caveats included return of the offshore island strongholds and demobilization of the guerillas. These were very dicey times for all U.S. military advisors in JACK and EUSA guerrilla command.<sup>87</sup>

With UN ship patrols and aircraft flights restricted to south of the 38th Parallel after the Armistice, North Korean fast patrol craft eliminated amphibious raids into North Korea. CIA agent overland insertions continued, but survivability was limited to a few days. Walkouts were precarious enterprises. The guerrilla E&E corridor across North Korea had proven to be an expensive exercise in futility by the time it self-destructed in the winter of 1951.<sup>88</sup> The cease-fire requirement to evacuate the North Korean offshore islands (reduced to five total on both coasts) was the final death knell for guerrilla operations.<sup>89</sup> For all intents and purposes, the Armistice ended JACK paramilitary operations and the EUSA guerrilla mission.

Of all CIA covert operations against North Korea, the paramilitary actions and intelligence collection efforts conducted by JACK Maritime were the most successful. East coast raids were conducted primarily by the CIA-trained and led SMG. EUSA guerrilla command elements were restricted to south of the bomb line (below Wonsan). The guerrilla raids against the mainland proved only to have nuisance value. Since U.S. Army advisors were restricted from accompanying 'their' guerrillas, 'success' claims could not be substantiated.<sup>90</sup> However, the JACK military advisors like the Army men in EUSA guerrilla command, routinely used CCRAK boat assets for operations and resupply, coordinated naval gunfire support with U.S. Navy 'picket' destroyers, and maintained liaison with ROK coastal forces at the tactical level.<sup>91</sup>

JACK was not immune to CCRAK, General Matthew B. Ridgway's attempt to control all covert operations in theater.<sup>92</sup> The Document Research Division (cover for the CIA liaison office in FEC) provided the deputy director of CCRAK. MAJ Singlaub, the JACK chief of staff and operations officer, was 'tagged' with that duty. However, the CIA only reported directly to Washington. Its worldwide strategic mission transcended that of FEC. In his memoirs Singlaub simply stated "that JACK had neither the responsibility nor inclination to coordinate its independent covert activities with CCRAK."<sup>93</sup> But,

because JACK was filled with detailed military, career officers 'walked a tightrope' with their service commands in Japan and Korea. "Though CCRAK was a 'paper command,' I considered it a rival for personnel, funding, air support, and above all, mission authorization. However, if one wanted to get a conventional combat command in Korea, you tread carefully," said Singlaub.<sup>94</sup> Scarce military air and sealift and contracted maritime assets were not allocated by CCRAK according to mission need.<sup>95</sup> Control of delivery means was perceived by them to be a source of power. But, at the tactical level, the Army 'doers' shared transportation to accomplish operational and resupply missions.<sup>96</sup>

**"If we did any good, I was never told. We were just out there being a pain in their ass." — GEN Kingston**

JACK did better with their resources than the U.S. military services involved in paramilitary activities and intelligence collection because its advisors accompanied the SMG on combat missions and inserted and recovered agents. Its Maritime Section did accomplish the most. However, retired General Robert Kingston summed it up: "If we did any good, I was never told. We were just out there being a pain in their ass."<sup>97</sup> JACK headquarters closed in August 1953, shortly after the Armistice was signed (27 July 1953). A postwar assessment of CIA and JACK intelligence reports revealed that Communist counterintelligence "papermills and fabrications" were the sources for most North Korean intelligence provided to FEC and Washington during the Korean War.<sup>98</sup> ♣

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- 17 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; *Civil Air Transport (CAT) enabled the Joint Advisory Commission, Korea (JACK) to ignore the cumbersome restrictions of Combined Command Reconnaissance Activities, Korea (CCRACK) to aerial resupply guerrilla bases and to shuttle hundreds of guerrillas and agents between its various training and staging bases throughout the Far East.* William M. Leary, *Perilous Missions: Civil Air Transport and CIA Covert Operations in Asia* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002), 126.
- 18 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; retired MG John K. Singlaub, *Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century* (NY: Summit Books, 1991), 81.
- 19 COL Albert R. 'Bert' Haney, first JACK commander, was a CIA careerist covered as a U.S. Army colonel. When it came to planning and conducting military and paramilitary operations, the 'nominal' colonel relied heavily on his detailed military service professionals. Singlaub interview, 21 March 2012; Sadler interview, 18 November 2011; Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; retired GEN Robert C. Kingston, interview by LTC Anthony V. Nida, 1987. U.S. Army Military History Institute, Senior Officer Oral History Program, Project 1987-16, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle Barracks, PA, hereafter cited by name and project number; Dwyer, *Commandos From the Sea: The History of Amphibious Special Warfare in World War II and the Korean War* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1998), 237, 249-250; Dwyer "Behind the Lines," 67; Both USMC LTCs 'Rip' Robertson and Tucker Gougelmann stayed with the CIA after the Korean War "Rip Robertson and Tucker Gougelmann had been in Vietnam long before I arrived. They were still there on an extended tour to help counter the roughly 3,000 VC terrorist assassinations annually which included innocent school teachers, their families, government officials, land owners, and anyone outwardly opposed to Communism," commented Rudy A. Enders at [www.air-america.org/Articles/enders/riviernam\\_1.pdf](http://www.air-america.org/Articles/enders/riviernam_1.pdf) accessed 11/5/2012.
- 20 Cremeans, "The Role of the USS Begor (APD-127) in Clandestine Operations in North Korea, 1950-51," 2 at <http://www.ussbegor.org/seaStories49.htm> accessed 11/6/2012; Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, 61-62.
- 21 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011 and 18 November 2011; Nicholas Dujmovic, "Extraordinary Fidelity: Two CIA Prisoners in China, 1952-73," *Studies in Intelligence* (December 2006), 50-4, 2.
- 22 Far East Division, CIA, "The Secret War in Korea: June 1950 to June 1952," 17 June 1968 at <http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/korea.pdf> accessed on 11/9/2012.
- 23 Singlaub interviews, 12 September 2008 and 20-21 March 2012.
- 24 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Singlaub, *Hazardous Duty*, 181-82; Dwyer, *Commandos From the Sea*, 248; Dwyer "Behind the Lines," 67.
- 25 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 67.
- 26 MAJ Robert E. Mattingly, unpublished U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College Paper, "Herringbone Cloak - GI Dagger Marines of the OSS," (Quantico, VA: USMC Development and Education Command, 1979), 103.
- 27 George C. Atcheson, III, telephone interview by Briscoe, 3 March 2006, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 28 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005. Army infantry COL William R. Peers, OSS Detachment 101, Burma, WWII, was detailed to the CIA on Taiwan. One of his tasks was to "gear up a motorized junk construction and rehab operation up the coast at Keelung," according to Frank Holober. Holober, *Raiders of the China Coast: CIA Covert Operations during the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1999), 19.
- 29 Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 6 from <http://www.korean-war.com/Archives/2004/02/msg00118.html> accessed 10/9/2012; Korean War Chronology at <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron52b.htm> accessed 10/12/2005.
- 30 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 31 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 32 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 33 Colonel Rod Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," *Conflict*, 7:2 (1987), 162.
- 34 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 35 Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 7 from <http://www.korean-war.com/Archives/2004/02/msg00118.html> accessed 10/9/2012; Korean War Chronology, <http://www.history.navy.mil/korea/chron51a.htm> accessed 10/12/2005; When John Limond Hart left as the second JACK chief (1952-1953), "the enemy's security precautions were so stringent that we still did not have any intelligence agents located in the North." Hart, *The CIA's Russians* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003), 10.
- 36 Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 7 from <http://www.korean-war.com/Archives/2004/02/msg00118.html> accessed 10/9/2012; Korean War Chronology, <http://www.history.navy.mil/korea/chron51a.htm> accessed 10/12/2005.
- 37 Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 8, 9 from <http://www.korean-war.com/Archives/2004/02/msg00118.html> accessed 10/9/2012; Korean War Chronology, <http://www.history.navy.mil/korea/chron51a.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea51b.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/korea/chron51a.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron5a.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron5b.htm> accessed 10/12/2005.
- 38 Hwang-Sung (editor), *My Father's War* (Indianapolis, IN: Dog Ear Publishing, 2008), 132.
- 39 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; The Yo-do airstrip would later be improved and lengthened by Navy Seabees. On 15 July 1952, seven Corsairs made emergency landings on the airstrip, refueled, and flew back to their aircraft carrier. It was later named in honor of Vice Admiral R.P. Briscoe, Commander, NFFE, who authorized its enlargement. Korean War Chronology at <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron52b.htm>; Frank Ransom, "Air-Sea Rescue 1941-1952," U.S. Air Force Historical Study No. 95. USAF Historical Division, Research Studies Institute, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL (August 1954), 160, 166; Forrest L. Marion, *That Others Might Live: USAF Air Rescue in Korea* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Force History and Museums Program, 2004), 11; CDRs Malcolm W. Cagle and Frank A. Manson, *The Sea War in Korea* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1957), 427-430.
- 40 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Kingston interview, 1987, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 41 Korean War Chronology, <http://www.history.navy.mil/korea/chron51a.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea51b.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/korea/chron51a.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron5a.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/horea/chron52b.htm>; <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron53a.htm> accessed 10/12/2005.
- 42 Singlaub, *Hazardous Duty*, 181-82.
- 43 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 44 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005. Supporting the USMC ANGLICO (Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company) on Yo-do was a bilingual Navy Intelligence officer, LT James S. Lampe. Born and raised in Syen Chun (northwest Korea, fifty miles from the Yalu and 225 miles northwest of Seoul), Lampe was the son of Presbyterian missionary H.W. Lampe (Princeton Theological Seminary). As the only American on Yo-do fluent in Korean, LT Lampe had strong rapport with the ROK military intelligence units and civilian residents. Still, there was no way to 'vett' the fishermen whose boats were used to deliver agents to the mainland. For them and their families on the mainland to survive most also 'worked for' North Korean intelligence. "LT James S. Lampe and USS George K. MacKenzie (DD-836)" at <http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/kowar/log-sup/kor51.html> accessed 4/5/2013.
- 45 John P. Finnegan, "The Evolution of US Army HUMINT: Intelligence Operations in the Korean War," *Studies in Intelligence*, 44: 2 (2000), 85; Monthly Historical Reports, 442nd Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment, 1 March 1951 through June 1951, RG 319, National Archives; retired MG Daniel C. Helix, interview by Briscoe, 14 April 2006, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 46 Helix interviews, 7 December 2005 and 14 April 2006; Helix, *The Kochi Maru Affair* (Walnut Creek, CA: Devil Mountain Books, 2004), 66, 83.
- 47 Singlaub interviews, 20-21 March 2012.



- 48 Hart, *The CIA's Russians*, 10; Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, 62, 64.
- 49 On 6 January 1952 the USS *Erben* (DD 631) sank a boat near Kojo that did not have proper recognition signals. It was carrying X Corps intelligence agents. This incident caused the Seventh Fleet commander to charge CTF 95 (US Naval blockade command) with the responsibility for controlling and clearing all friendly small craft operating near or above the bomb line on both coasts of Korea. FEC gave EUSA guerrilla command 'clearinghouse' authority and coordination responsibility for maritime operations with CTF 95. The two JACK trawlers stayed abreast of current US Navy operating requirements. Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Korean War Chronology, <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron5a.htm> accessed 10/12/2005.
- 50 Singlaub interviews, 12 September 2008 and 24 May 2011.
- 51 Korean War Chronology, <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/korea/chron52b.htm> accessed 10/9/2005; Fosmire interview, 13 April 2006.
- 52 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 53 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 54 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 55 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 67.
- 56 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 67.
- 57 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 67.
- 58 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 59 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 60 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Lee Wha Rang, *The Secret History of the Yong-do Partisan Unit* (Seoul: PROCOM Publishers, 2001); Yong-do Partisan Unit at <http://www.kimsoft.com/2005/Yong-doPartisans.htm>, 71-72 accessed 10/5/2006.
- 61 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Headquarters, Eighth U.S. Army Korea, General Orders Number 763, dated 12 December 1952, Award of the Bronze Star Medal with Letter "V" Device to Sergeant THOMAS G. FOSMIRE, for heroic achievement in connection with military operations against an armed enemy, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **GO Number 763 was forwarded to Commanding Officer, Joint Advisory Commission Korea, APO 72, on 14 December 1952.**
- 62 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 63 Pagnella interview, 17 March 2006; Dwyer, *Commandos From the Sea*, 253-55; Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 67.
- 64 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 65 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 66 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 67 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 68 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 69 Retired U.S. Navy LT B.W. Collins, undated, unpublished memoir "A Rare Experience," File: Korean Partisans/ Operations Papers/Oral History, U.S. Army Heritage & Education Center, Carlisle, PA.
- 70 Collins, "A Rare Experience."
- 71 Collins, "A Rare Experience."
- 72 Collins, "A Rare Experience."
- 73 Collins, "A Rare Experience."
- 74 Collins, "A Rare Experience."
- 75 Collins, "A Rare Experience."
- 76 Kingston interview, 1987, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 77 Kingston interview, 1987, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 78 Kingston interview, 1987, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 79 Kingston interview, 1987, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 80 Kingston interview, 1987, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 81 Kingston interview, 1987, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 82 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Kingston interview, USAMHI Project 1987-16; "Mike Nolan was an old Southeast Asia hand. He had been recruited during the Korean War when the Agency hired all the paramilitary officers they could find. Being a former professional football player with the Los Angeles Rams, Mike met the recruiting criteria: strong, aggressive and brave. However, like all quick start programs, most of these contract officers were axed when the Korean War ended. Mike, however, survived and was sent to Laos. Afterwards, he spent many years in hardship posts usually reserved for what insiders call 'knuckle draggers,'" wrote Rudy A. Enders at [www.air-america.org/Articles/enders/revietnam\\_1.pdf](http://www.air-america.org/Articles/enders/revietnam_1.pdf) accessed 11/5/2012.
- 83 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005.
- 84 Finnegan, "The Evolution of US Army HUMINT," 83; Historical Report, Far East Command/Liaison Detachment (Korea), 1 November 1951.
- 85 Major Shaun M. Darragh, "Where Special Operations Began: Hwanghae-do: The War of the Donkeys," *Army*, November 1984, 73.
- 86 Fosmire interview, 6 September 2005; Kingston interview, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 87 Retired COL Charles W. Norton, interview by Briscoe, 9 April 2004, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 88 *CIA in Korea*, Volume III, 529 excerpts cleared for release by CIA, 6 June 1997.
- 89 Michael E. Haas, *In the Devil's Shadow: UN Special Operations During the Korean War* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000), 200.
- 90 Darragh, "Where Special Operations Began," 75.
- 91 Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," 175; Kingston interview, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 92 Haas, *In the Devil's Shadow*, 38-39.
- 93 MAJ Steven A. Fondacaro, MMAS thesis, "A Strategic Analysis of U.S. Special Operations during the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953," U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS (19 May 1988), 69; Ben S. Malcolm, *White Tigers: My Secret War in North Korea* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1996), 130; Dwyer, "Behind the Lines," 19 at <http://www.korean-war.com/Archives/2004/02/msg00118.html> accessed 10/9/2012.
- 94 Singlaub interviews, 20-21 March 2012 ; Singlaub, *Hazardous Duty*, 181-82; Kingston interview, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 95 Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," 160.
- 96 Sadler interview, 3 March 2011; Singlaub interviews 20-21 March 2011; Paschall, "Special Operations in Korea," 160.
- 97 Kingston interview, USAMHI Project 1987-16.
- 98 *CIA in Korea*, Volume III, 530-531 excerpts cleared for release by CIA, 6 June 1997; Hart, *The CIA's Russians*, 10.

SFC Thomas G. Fosmire conducts formal guard mount of Chen-do Gyo guerrillas at the CIA facility on Saipan.





# **JACK**

## AIR OPERATIONS

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Korea, 1951-1953

by Charles H. Briscoe



Korea provided a 'hot war' operational environment for America's fledgling Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), established on 18 September 1947. Some OSS (Office of Strategic Services) veterans of World War II were recruited. After the North Koreans invaded the South on 25 June 1950, General (GEN) Douglas A. MacArthur, former Southwest Pacific commander in WWII who denied OSS access to his theater, reluctantly permitted the CIA to establish an operational agency in Korea. By then, the United Nations (UN) had selected the Allied Commander of Occupied Japan and the U.S. Far East Command (FECOM) to lead its member nation forces in the restoration of *status antebellum* on the peninsula. With limited sea and airlift to move understrength, poorly trained and equipped divisions of Eighth U.S. Army to Korea, American units were committed piecemeal to stiffen the resolve of retreating Republic of Korea (ROK) forces. The UN commander was desperate. Services with special operations units and capabilities were welcome.

The Joint Advisory Commission, Korea (JACK), covered as the 8206<sup>th</sup> Army Unit (AU), was a CIA operational element. Its mission was to collect strategic intelligence and to operate an escape and evasion (E&E) network for downed UN airmen. This entailed recruiting and inserting agents far behind enemy lines by airdrop or boat insertions as well as hiring Korean fishing junks 'moonlighting' as smugglers/pirates to rescue downed flyers on both coasts.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this article is to show that there were operational needs for the aerial recovery of agents and downed UN pilots behind enemy lines. JACK validated the use of all weather, night flying light bombers for agent parachute insertions and experimented with free fall parachuting. A WWII personnel recovery system was tried because helicopters were slow and limited in range and lift capacity. These were air operations challenges faced by the CIA in Korea in 1951 and for the duration of the war.

In JACK, the Operations chief, OSS veteran Major (MAJ) John K. Singlaub, served as *de facto* Deputy Commander/Chief of Staff. He was responsible for filling the operational positions. Singlaub recruited experienced active duty military personnel and had them detailed to the CIA. Because Air Operations were crucial to getting intelligence agents, resistance organizers, and saboteurs behind the lines and to resupply them, MAJ Singlaub looked for experienced airborne and Ranger officers and sergeants inbound for Korea or serving in the 187<sup>th</sup> Airborne Regimental Combat Team (ARCT), the FECOM strategic reserve in Japan.<sup>3</sup>

While recruiting in Japan, Singlaub spotted orders on a 'known quantity' from his days with the Ranger Training Command at Fort Benning, GA. Captain (CPT) John F. Sadler was a 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division combat veteran. While the Pathfinder Committee chief in the Airborne Department, CPT Sadler helped train Ranger Infantry Companies (Airborne) in 1950-51. MAJ Singlaub got Sadler diverted from his 187<sup>th</sup> ARCT assignment. He was ideal for the JACK Air Operations (Air Ops). Sadler was detailed to the CIA for fifteen months.<sup>5</sup> The WWII paratrooper had his work cut out for him.

The change from the fluid tactical environment of 1950 and early 1951 to static combat line positions complicated

## MAJ John K. Singlaub



MAJ John K. Singlaub, Deputy Commander, Chief of Staff, and Operations Officer, JACK, 1951.

- DOB: 10 July 1921.
- POB: Independence, CA.
- HS: Van Nuys HS, CA, 1939 to UCLA.
- Fort Benning, GA, ROTC cadets to OCS.
- Commissioned 14 January 1943, USAR 2LT, Infantry.
- January-August 1943-Ft Benning, GA, Assistant Plt Ldr, Parachute School & Regt Demo Officer, 515<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR).
- September 1943-Fall 1945, OSS Jedburgh Team JAMES, France & Mercy Mission Team PIGEON, China.
- March 1946-September 1948, SSU & CIA, Chief of Station, Mukden, China.
- December 1948-1949, CIA, China Desk Officer, Washington, DC.
- 1950, Bn XO, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn, 505<sup>th</sup> PIR, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC & S-3 Operations Officer, Ranger Training Command, Fort Benning, GA.
- 1951, Deputy Commander, Chief of Staff, and Operations Officer, JACK, Korea.<sup>4</sup>

C-46 Commando



C-47 Skytrain





intelligence collection and resupply of guerrilla groups. Although UN forces enjoyed naval and air superiority around and above the Korean peninsula, the entry of massive numbers of Red Chinese forces in November 1950 enabled North Korean Communists to rebuild stringent social controls within their provinces as UN forces were pushed south. Thus, Allied intelligence agents working behind the lines got little or no local support. Inserted by air, land, and sea, these operatives had to be resupplied and recovered.<sup>6</sup>

The primary aircraft for these missions were the WWII-era cargo 'workhorses,' the slow, unarmed, twin-engine C-46 *Commando* and C-47 *Skytrain* that lacked all-weather, night flying radar. Fifth Air Force assigned a LORAN (Long Range Navigation) operator to the crews to facilitate night flying. The airman carried a 'cast off' Army Air Corps bomber ANP-4, a first generation LORAN system, which was difficult to calibrate in smooth flight.<sup>7</sup> Just as in WWII, personnel and resupply drops were accomplished during the highest illumination phases of the moon.<sup>8</sup> Following the moon pattern Communists reinforced areas and concentrated anti-aircraft weapons and searchlights for ten days a month.

WWII European Theater airdrop techniques did not work well in Korea. The approach of a slow cargo plane

at night invariably meant an airdrop of people or supplies or both. Drop zone (DZ) 'signal fires' suddenly appeared all across the terrain below. "As a result aircrews dropped supplies and even personnel without being sure that they were over the right drop-zone and that it was not a trap," explained a CIA history.<sup>11</sup> The Air Force pilots determined the 'correct' DZs, not the Army jumpmasters in the rear cargo section. Flying with large-scale aviation maps (1/250,000) that lacked contour elevations reduced precision airdrops. Former Sergeant First Class (SFC) Kenneth A. Jolemore, 8240<sup>th</sup> AVIARY Section jumpmaster, stated: "I never put a man out with any assurance that he was over the right drop zone."<sup>12</sup> The Air Force supported AVIARY and JACK Air Ops agent insertions and aerial resupply with the same aircrews flying olive drab C-47s and C-46s and black B-26s. Pilot experience, search lights near population centers, and the volume of anti-aircraft (AA) and ground fire further reduced accuracy of airdrops.<sup>13</sup>

Regardless, air resupply missions could not be done regularly without organic parachute riggers and packing facilities. With a constant requirement for personnel and equipment airdrop missions, JACK Air Ops needed a parachute rigger section. The fastest way to man it was to get military personnel temporarily detailed to the CIA. Former 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Sergeant First Class (SFC)

## ANP-4 LORAN A

LORAN, the acronym for Long Range Navigation, is "a terrestrial, high power, hyperbolic navigation aid that operates in the 90-110 kHz frequency band."<sup>9</sup> During WWII, LORAN assisted Allied bomber crews. The first generation ANP-4 LORAN A model had an oscilloscope screen display. Operators had to count pulses on the circular screen and interpret information with special maps to verify aircraft location. Because at least two ground stations were required to remove ambiguities in the position of the receiver, six LORAN stations were built in Japan during the Korean War.

The time difference between the master and the first secondary fixed station identified one curve on the oscilloscope. The time difference between the master and a second secondary fixed station identified the next

curve. The intersection of the two curves positioned the aircraft in Korea in relation to the secondary fixed stations on Japan. The LORAN operator installed his man portable system in the radio/navigator position directly behind the pilot cockpit of the C-46 *Commandos* and C-47 *Skytrains*.

While staring at the opaque nine-inch oscilloscope screen in a dimly red-lighted cubicle, he spun dials to make jiggling waves intersect to pinpoint a drop zone by its coordinates. It was hard to calibrate in a high flying bomber during WWII, but extremely difficult as atmospherics kept changing as the old transports flew low over lightly populated, predominantly mountainous terrain in Korea. Add evasive maneuvers to escape small arms ground and anti-aircraft (AA) fire and the LORAN A became useless.<sup>10</sup>





# CPT JOHN F. SADLER



John Francis Sadler, Jr., later John Ford Sadler, Jr., born 30 June 1924 in Bush, Illinois, was an only child of a coal miner-railroad man and his wife. Though a good baseball player at Hurst Bush High School, a lack of money for college and limited job opportunities led to six months duty in the Civilian Conservation Corps (Wisconsin and Illinois) before graduation in 1941. Sadler enlisted in the Army in early 1942. During basic training at Camp Grant, Illinois, the new recruit discovered that parachutists received fifty dollars extra a month. He volunteered and at Camp Mackall, NC, Private (PVT) John Sadler received four weeks of airborne training from the 511<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division. After completing jumpmaster training the new F Company paratrooper was promoted to Private First Class (PFC). When the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne got to Luzon in the Philippines, Corporal (CPL) Sadler was sent off to Alamo Scout training. He returned in time to make the combat jump on Tagaytay Ridge. During heavy fighting in Manila, Sergeant (SGT) Sadler was shot twice in the left leg.

While in the hospital, he received a battlefield commission to Second Lieutenant (2LT), Infantry. After his recovery, instead of going back to F Company, 2LT Sadler went to the Sixth Army's Officer Training Course (OTC) in Australia. As the top graduate in the first OTC class he was retained as the Tactical Officer for the next class. Afterwards, 2LT Sadler went to advise the 66<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, Philippine Army, a guerrilla unit in northeast Luzon commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Russell W. Volckmann. Following VJ Day (2 September 1945) First Lieutenant (1LT) Sadler rejoined the 511<sup>th</sup> PIR at Camp Schimmelpfennig in central Japan. There he wrote programs of instruction (POI) and conducted company administration, supply, mess, and maintenance courses for junior officers of the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne transitioning to garrison duty as part of the Occupation.

In February 1947, Captain (CPT) Sadler left Japan for Fort Benning, GA, to attend the Infantry Officers Associate Course. While at Fort Benning, he renewed his acquaintance with LTC Volckmann who was writing unconventional warfare manuals. After completing advanced infantry training CPT Sadler reported to the Ground Committee of the Airborne Department. As chief of the Pathfinder Committee in 1950, he supported Major (MAJ) John K. 'Jack' Singlaub, an Office of Strategic Services (OSS) team leader in France and China during WWII, who was the Operations Officer of the Ranger Training Command (RTC). This new element trained and qualified Ranger Infantry Companies (Airborne) for Korea.

Despite orders to the 187<sup>th</sup> Airborne Regimental Combat Team (ARCT) in 1951, MAJ Singlaub diverted Sadler to JACK (Joint Advisory Commission, Korea), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) paramilitary arm in Korea. He wanted this combat paratrooper, who was also the most up-to-date airborne practitioner, to direct his Air Operations Section. Night C-47 *Skytrain* and C-46 *Commando* resupply missions and B-26 *Invader* light bomber agent airdrops were his first challenges. As JACK Air Ops director, CPT Sadler became a military free fall pioneer in 1952 and the subject matter expert (SME) for Far East Command (FECOM) on aircraft 'snatch' recovery of downed pilots. He was a JACK agent handler as well.<sup>1</sup>



11th Airborne  
Division SSI



511th Parachute  
Regiment DUI



Alamo Scouts  
Patch



Oscar Johnson, Jr. was the JACK senior rigger. After supporting the training of a Philippines airborne battalion for the CIA, Johnson volunteered for Korea when he was moved to a weapons storage facility on Okinawa. Between supporting the airborne training of Korean and Chinese agents with parachutes and building resupply bundles the JACK rigger had a lot to do. Mission jumps were made with only main parachutes; agents parachuting at eight hundred feet wore no reserves.<sup>14</sup>

"When flying as jumpmaster, I wore sterile fatigues; no dog tags, no ID card, and no personal photos. If it was a long mission I could put on an Air Force heated 'bunny suit' that plugged into the electrical system. I carried a zippered ten by twelve inch pouch which had a large scale map of North Korea, compass, blood chits in several languages, six gold rings for bartering, a .25 cal pistol with a dozen bullets, and a cyanide capsule. A personal sidearm or weapon wasn't allowed. There was no thought of E & E (escape and evasion) or 'head to the coast' SOP (standing operating procedure if shot down," said SFC Johnson.<sup>15</sup> AVIARY took fewer precautions.



Philippines Airborne Battalion SSI



Philippines Legion of Honor Medal



Philippines Airborne Wings

It was difficult in the 8240th.

*"We operated in sterile uniforms, but dressed warmly—field jackets with sweaters and knit and pile caps. There was no insignia whatsoever and we carried no ID. I carried a .45 cal automatic pistol tucked into my belt because the agents had hand grenades. That was our only real worry in the aircraft. We did not wear 'monkey' (safety tethers straps. The agents simply sat on the floor of the aircraft—no seat belts. Because we had no maps our informal 'E and E' (escape and evasion) plan if shot down was to find some 'friendly,' albeit unknown, agents to help us get to the coast. Basically, we didn't have 'diddly squat' for survival."* recalled AVIARY SFC Jolemore.<sup>17</sup>

Though JACK took more realistic approaches to operations, its administrative activities received little attention.

## SFC Kenneth A. Jolemore



Canadian-born SFC Kenneth A. Jolemore was assigned to AVIARY from late February to June 1952.

- DOB: 28 June 1928.
- POB: Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- HS: 1946, Menard Memorial HS.
- April 1948, enlisted in Army as airborne volunteer; May-July 1948, BCT & Leadership Training, 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (ID), Fort Dix, NJ.
- July-August 1948, Airborne training, Fort Benning, GA.
- August 1948-May 1952, A Company, 505<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC.
- Jumpmaster, 1950.
- Master Parachutist, 1952, Private rifleman to SFC acting platoon sergeant.
- June 1952, 8240<sup>th</sup> AU, Wolfpack, Yong Piong-do.
- February-May 1953, 8240<sup>th</sup> AU, AVIARY. Attachment to 45<sup>th</sup> ID for TLO (tactical line crosser operations), CIB (Combat Infantryman Badge) and qualified for four Air Medals (AM) while flying combat air delivery missions with AVIARY, but received only one AM.<sup>16</sup>

## SGT Oscar Johnson, Jr.



82nd Airborne Division parachute rigger SGT Oscar Johnson, Jr. helped train a Philippine airborne battalion in 1949-1950 before volunteering to serve in Korea with JACK.

- DOB: 18 July 1929.
- POB: Hiteman, Iowa.
- HS: 1947, East HS, Waterloo, IA.
- Enlisted in Army as airborne volunteer, 1948.
- BCT Ft Knox, KY (3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Div), Aug-Oct 1948.
- Airborne training, Fort Benning, GA, Nov-Dec 1948.
- Ft Bragg, NC, 82<sup>nd</sup> Abn Div, Parachute Maintenance Co, Jan-Nov 1949 (Rigger Training after 6 months OJT).
- CIA detail to support training of first airborne battalion in the Philippines, 1949-1950.
- CIA, Okinawa (2 mos) and JACK, Korea, 1951-1953 (45 combat airdrop missions).
- CIA VA & Guatemala (6 mos), 1952-1957.
- Ft Wolters, TX & Ft Rucker, AL, WO R/W aviator training & assignment 1957-1960.
- 26<sup>th</sup> Trans Co, France 1960-63.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Avn Co, Ft Belvoir, 1963-65.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div, RVN, 1965-66.
- Vice POTUS Flt Det, Snelling, MN, until retirement as CW3 in 1968.



## AF SGT Gene H. Rust



Air Force senior auto mechanic, SGT Gene H. Rust, escaped the JACK motor pool by On-the-Job Training (OJT) to become a parachute rigger.

- DOB: 22 June 1931.
- POB: Crown Point, IN.
- HS: 1950, Lowell HS, Lowell, IN.
- 16 November 1950 enlisted US Air Force.
- Basic Training, Lackland AFB, San Antonio, TX, 1951.
- Cheyenne, WY, Special Vehicle Operators Course, 1951.
- Motor vehicle operator, Patrick AFB, FL, March 1951-April 1952.
- 1007<sup>th</sup> Air Intelligence Group, Washington, DC, April-September 1952.
- JACK Air, Tongnae, Korea, October 1952-December 1953, awarded Air Medal.
- Discharged USAF, 21 December 1953.<sup>18</sup>



Air Force 2LT John W. MacDonald, 21<sup>st</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron (Kyushu Gypsies) evacuating wounded from the Chosin Reservoir, was the JACK Air liaison officer and administrative pilot. He was one of the original pilots that flew *The Voice* and *The Speaker*, the C-47 Skytrains especially modified for Army Psywar radio broadcasting and leaflet drop missions.



Pocket patch of USAF 21<sup>st</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron, Detachment 2, Kyushu Gypsies.

The Air Force B-26 *Invader* light bomber, sometimes used for Army Psywar radio broadcasting, was fast, well-armed, and better equipped for all weather, low level night airdrop missions.



"Since a rigger had not showed up to replace me when my twelve months in Korea got near, I decided to fix that problem myself," said SFC Johnson.<sup>19</sup> The former 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne rigger started training someone to be his replacement. Air Force Sergeant (SGT) Gene H. 'Tiny' Rust, NCOIC (Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge) of the JACK motor pool at Tongnae, desperately wanted to fly and was willing to pack parachutes and build door bundles to fulfill that desire. After several weeks of OJT (on-the-job training), SFC Johnson presented his newly trained 'rigger' protégé to the commander, COL Mosley. Rust was given thirty minutes to pack a parachute. When he finished in twenty-five, Rust recalled that the colonel asked, "Would you jump this chute?" He replied, "Yes, sir." "I got the job and I tell you that I was walking three feet off the ground. Flying was my first love."<sup>20</sup> After taking SGT Rust up on one operational flight to 'show him the ropes,' Johnson was allowed to go home.<sup>21</sup> The Air Force sergeant soon discovered the challenges of combat airdrops.

CPT Sadler sought other alternatives for airdrops. The Air Force liaison officer detailed to JACK, Second Lieutenant (2LT) John W. MacDonald, 21<sup>st</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron, the 'Kyushu Gypsies,' had piloted the C-47 *Skytrain* airplanes, *The Voice* and *The Speaker*, supporting U.S. Army Psywar leaflet and radio broadcast missions over Korea. As a Presbyterian missionary's teenage son in house arrest in Manila and interned in Los Baños prison in the Philippines until 23 February 1945, MacDonald was well-grounded in Asian culture. He flew a twin-engine C-45 *Expeditor* on resupply runs and an L-19 *Bird Dog* for JACK reconnaissance missions.<sup>22</sup> Since the Air Force solution to the loss of *The Speaker* was to substitute a B-26 *Invader* for Psywar broadcasting, the Jack Air liaison officer was able to arrange the use of one for JACK airdrop tests.<sup>23</sup>

FEAF used the WWII twin-engine B-26 light bomber as its primary low level night attack aircraft. UN air superiority forced the Chinese and North Koreans to move troops and supplies under cover of darkness. The *Invader* was fast, armed with six to eight .50 caliber machine guns and had all-weather radar. While its bomb load was limited, the bay was large enough to hold parachutists. An equipment bundle could be fit in the aft fuselage. When the JACK Air sergeants had 'their' B-26 to use, they verified measurements and fashioned makeshift seating for jumpers, handholds, and door bundles small enough to fit the aft storage area.<sup>24</sup>

The innovative NCOs improvised a simple jump platform, mounted canvas strap handholds, and rigged an anchor line cable. Former 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne infantryman and 7<sup>th</sup> Ranger Company cadre, SFC Donald F. Stephens, built a primitive narrow bench using 2" x 4" wooden boards. He attached it to three fuselage hooks on the right side above the bomb bay opening. There was sitting room for two average Americans or four or five Asians facing the left side of the B-26. The parachute static lines were attached to the anchor line cable before takeoff. The jumpers held on with canvas 'subway-like' straps.<sup>25</sup>

Just before the bomb bay doors were opened, the JACK jumpmaster in the tail section received an intercom alert



from the Air Force pilot. About three minutes from the drop zone (DZ) the clam shell bomb bay doors were opened revealing the ground 800 feet below. Then, one by one, starting with the rearmost jumper, the jumpmaster, in turn, pointed at each parachutist signalling him to push off from the seat in a tight body position (much like a jumper exiting a helicopter) and drop into the night through the bomb bay.<sup>26</sup> Like all innovative solutions the system had to be validated before employment ... even in wartime.

CPT Sadler and his NCOs first practiced the exit technique from a parked airplane. The B-26 had tall tricycle landing gear. Mattresses below the bomb bay cushioned parachute landing falls (PLF) as the JACK personnel practiced exits. The parachute static line anchor cable was attached to fuselage bulkheads. The JACK jumpmaster sequentially pointed to each man to exit to prevent static line entanglements in the tight space. CPT Sadler and SGT Stephens were test jumpers; the two Americans filled the cramped space. Viability of the B-26 airdrop technique was confirmed by a couple of practice jumps on the Han River sandbars.<sup>27</sup>

But, before approving the B-26 for personnel airdrops, the smaller, 150-pound JACK Operations chief insisted on jumping it himself. Because Americans were bigger and heavier than the Koreans and Chinese, MAJ Singlaub was concerned about aircraft drop speed. "Ninety knots was pushing the upper limit for a safe exit," said Singlaub. "With that proviso I gave CPT Sadler a 'go ahead.'"<sup>28</sup> This enabled JACK to change the moonlight drop routine that the North Korean military had figured out.<sup>29</sup>

One of first missions that JACK cooperatively supported for FECOM was recovery of downed UN pilots. Within six months a fleet of contract fishing junks had been assembled on both coasts of Korea. North of the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, the escape and evasion (E&E) system entailed getting to the offshore islands where the junk fleets regularly took harbor. Once on an island the airmen had to survive until rescued by the contracted smugglers/bandits/fishermen. JACK gave substantial rewards for recovered pilots as well as information collected on the enemy. Since the coastal junk fleets were contracted assets, JACK did not furnish radios. Contact with them was as sporadic as their searches of the hundreds of small islands along the coasts. It was pure luck that a pilot was rescued and the few that were had spent weeks just staying alive.<sup>30</sup> This recovery system was slow and too unreliable. Back in the States the CIA searched warehouses for OSS recovery systems.

A World War II personnel snatch recovery system was found. A parachute-qualified instructor brought the packaged equipment to Johnson Airbase, Japan, headquarters of 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force. OSS Special Operations (SO) Branch in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater modified the 1942 U.S. Army Air Corps CG-4 *Waco* glider recovery apparatus to snatch a man from the ground. The SO men nicknamed their rig, the 'Jerk for Jesus.'<sup>31</sup> CPT John Sadler, the Air Ops chief, was sent to Japan in July 1952 to become qualified on this extraction system because JACK had taken responsibility for Allied pilot recovery in Korea. Unbeknownst to him, some experimental high altitude parachute jumping was included in the training.<sup>32</sup>



SFC Kenneth A. Jolemore and SGT Palmer, JACK Air NCOs, demonstrate the B-26 bomb bay jump platform.

## SFC Donald F. Stephens



7th Ranger Company and 82nd Airborne Division Pathfinder, SFC Donald F. Stephens, was recruited by MAJ John K. Singlaub, the former Ranger Training Command operations officer.

- DOB: 17 May 1930.
- POB: Wayne, Michigan.
- HS: Wayne High School, 1948.
- Fall 1948, Basic Training, Fort Knox, KY.
- 1949, Airborne training & 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, Ft Benning, GA.
- 7th Ranger Infantry Co, Ft Benning, GA, 1950-1951.
- JACK in Korea, 1951-1953.
- CIA VA & Guatemala (6 mos), 1954.
- Distinguished Flying Cross & 4 Air Medals with JACK.

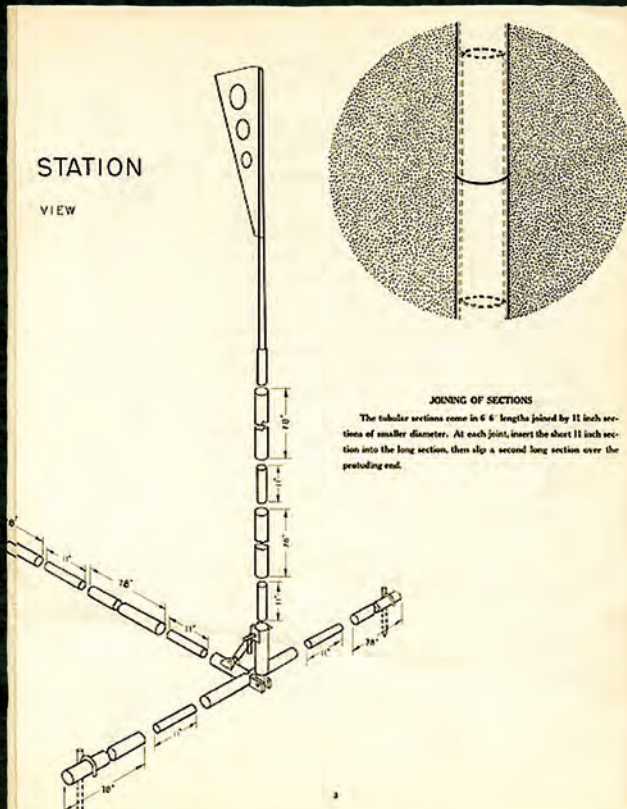
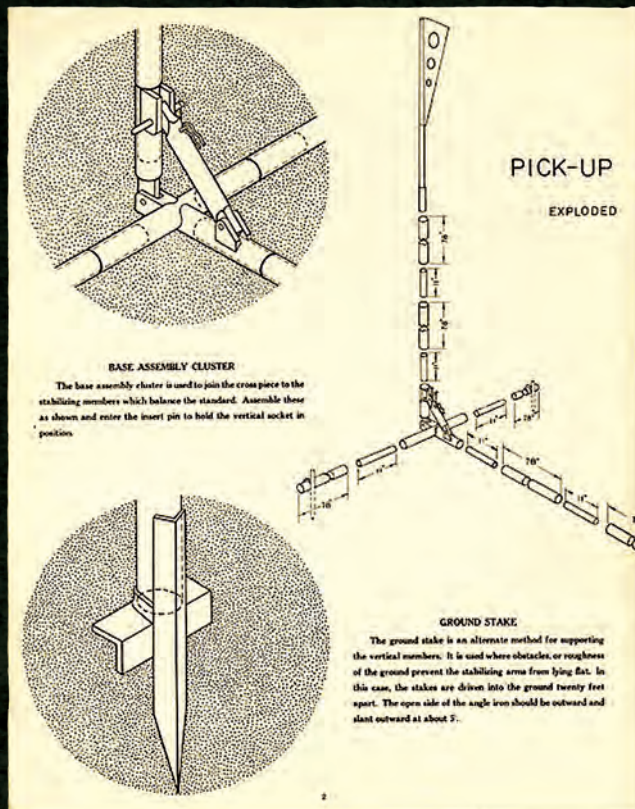
The CIA was always interested in exploring alternative ways of infiltrating intelligence operatives behind enemy lines. High altitude parachute drops of personnel could be done with less chance of detection from the ground at night. However, free fall parachuting as we know it today was a relatively new recreational sport in 1952. The plethora of cheap surplus parachutes and light airplanes allowed daring civilians to probe dangerous frontiers.



# 'JERK FOR JESUS'

During World War II, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) developed a man recovery system devised from the 1942 U.S. Army Air Corps CG 4 Waco glider recovery apparatus. The OSS Special Operations (SO) Branch in the China Burma India Theater had come up with the

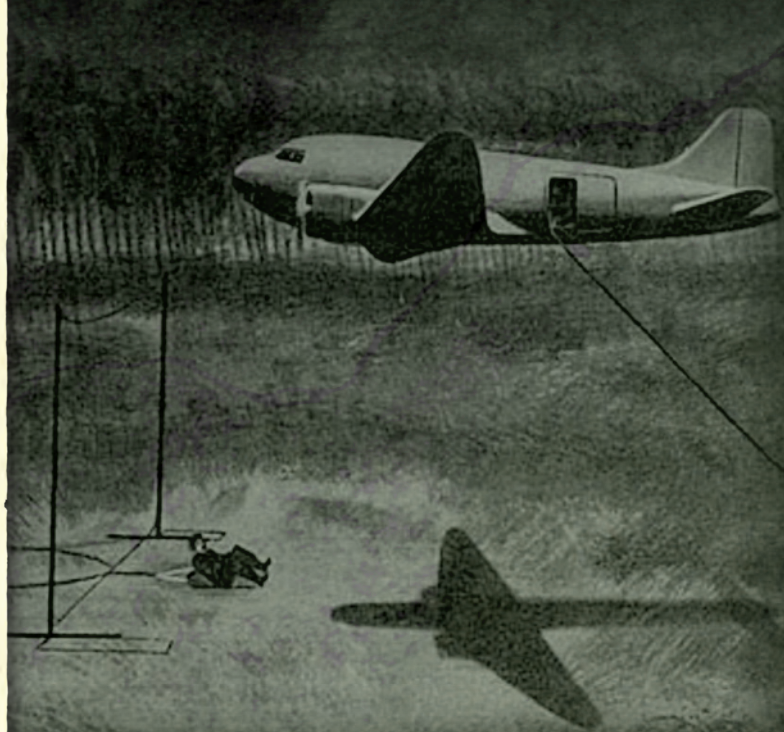
modification. This became affectionately nicknamed by the SO men as the Jerk for Jesus. Luckily it been stored in a warehouse until rediscovered by the CIA for use by JACK Air. The snatch recovery system had to be assembled properly based on two schematics sewn on to its canvas



When the pick-up plane is sighted, quickly insert into their sockets first the vertical section "A", then "B" (see page 5), and remove the insert pins from the clusters.

Arrange the line so that the loop lies on top of the leader. The rope should be laid out in the simplest manner without knots or kinks.

When this is correctly done, move the signal panel into the "ready" position. Snap your runners onto the ring at the end of the rope and assume the position for the final pick-up, fastening the thigh straps.





packing bag; there were no written instructions. Instruction and schematics based on this system used by CPT John F. Sadler and JACK Air shown here are from pages of the Man Pickup Manual, prepared by the Miscellaneous Branch and Specifications & Drawings Office Equipment Laboratory Headquarters Air Technical Service Command, Area B TSEPL 3H3, Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio.



China Burma India  
SSI



Office of Strategic  
Services Pin



Since no directions or photos came with the system, CPT John F. Sadler and the Air Force technician wrote down the assembly instructions, step by step, and had pictures taken.





*"I felt like the proverbial guinea pig. I didn't volunteer for this. Oxygen was something only bomber crews used in World War II. Altimeters were mounted in the aircraft instrument panel. My 'instructor' was a young Army captain who might have had a little more airborne experience than I had. He didn't jump with me, only acted as the 'jumpmaster,' if you could call it that," remembered CPT John Sadler, the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division veteran. "He simply told me when to jump."*<sup>33</sup>

"I started that first week by making five static line jumps using the standard Army T-7 parachute and reserve. The first was at 1500 feet and we gradually moved up to 2500 feet. The Army captain, wearing a radio headset, received altitude reports from the C-47 *Skytrain* pilot. Because it was summer I wore fatigues, jump boots, and a steel 'pot,' standard for 'Hollywood' jumps. It was only luck that I landed on the DZ (drop zone), which was anywhere on or near the airstrip. After those jumps I was briefed on how the WWII Air Force A-9 parachute with 'sit on' reserve worked. The main was activated by pulling a chest-mounted D-ring. The reserve D-ring was alongside my upper right leg. That's what I wore for the 'free fall' jumps," said Sadler. "My 'instructor' paid more attention to checking my harness, airdrop standards, and the specific jump altitudes. He did not have a recommended body position while I was 'free falling,' so I assumed the normal tight body position used for a static line parachute jump. Before each jump he told me a number to count to before yanking the ripcord."<sup>34</sup>

The WWII paratrooper added: "I admit that some of my counts were faster than others and I pulled my reserve twice. Dropping feet first in a tight airborne body position I fell like a rock. They didn't know much about terminal velocity, the effect of winds aloft, and impact of parachute opening shock on the jumper. The old T-7 was notorious for 'ringing your bell.' The 'free fall' opening shocks were worse. My body was snapped and jerked like a 'rag doll.' There were some long rides under canopy, but I never landed on the DZ. The captain collected his data and the C-47 aircrew got some oxygen flight time. I was happy to survive the 'training' without injury. Nothing was put in my records. I just recorded the jumps in my personal log."<sup>35</sup>

CPT Sadler soon learned that snatch recovery training was another 'experiment in progress' and training would be just as informal as the parachute jumping. Fortunately, the Air Force C-47 crew remained the same. The subject matter expert (SME) on the system was from Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. However, that Air Force technical sergeant had never set up the snatch wire apparatus nor had he been recovered by an aircraft. "I found out that he had no instructions to assemble the apparatus, only a few drawings of it. It was a 'Tinker Toy' set in an OD (olive drab) canvas bag. We figured it out, learning as we went. By the time we got it put together, I noticed that we had company. A crowd of Air Force officers, wives, and children had gathered along the runway to watch the show. As the senior man I was delegated to explain the snatch recovery system and narrate while the SME acted as the first 'wind dummy.' Since neither of us had any practical experience, I helped him into the canvas-strap body harness, snugged down his chest and leg straps, and checked out the rope. The C-47 circling overhead was radioed that we were ready," said Sadler. "It was game time."<sup>36</sup>



CPT John F. Sadler (inside aircraft doorway) with his C-47 airdrop and snatch recovery crew at Johnson Air Force Base, Japan, summer 1952. CPT Casey, pilot (standing 2nd from left), the 'Free Fall' jumpmaster (standing 4th from the left), and Snatch Recovery expert (squatting, right front).



"CPT Casey, the C-47 pilot, banked his aircraft and dropped down on the deck ... about twenty-five to thirty feet just parallel to the airstrip. A fixed metal recovery pole with a hook on the end hung down from the tail section of the roaring airplane. As the C-47 passed overhead it snagged the top horizontal rope. Casey pulled it up into a steep climb and the carefully laid out extraction rope snaked upwards with a jerk. The airman, seated facing the approaching airplane, was yanked backwards a foot off the ground for fifteen or twenty feet before flying upwards in a diagonal arc behind the rapidly vanishing airplane. In seconds he was dangling spread-eagled on a 100 foot line, twelve hundred feet in the air, speeding along at ninety knots. Twenty minutes later the C-47 landed, dropped off the SME, and took off again. It was my turn," recounted CPT Sadler.<sup>37</sup>

*"As you can see, [shown in 'Jerk for Jesus sidebar'] I wore no helmet or goggles, just my Corcoran jump boots. The SME almost gleefully relinquished the snatch harness, helped me into it, and laid out the rope. Being an old T-4 paratrooper I cinched my leg straps tight. Casey repeated the flying sequence. Then, I rocketed up into the sky in a whipping motion. Once the C-47 reached the recovery altitude I felt a slight tug when they started the winch. I experienced no flopping even close to the fuselage. A pulley apparatus was mounted near the door to reduce tension. Then, I felt strong arms pulling me inside. After the two crewmen dragged me forward they disconnected me from my tether," said CPT Sadler. "In retrospect, it was like a wild carnival ride. I did it four times. Like the SME, I had qualified on the recovery system and could speak with authority backed by experience. The next day an Air Force photographer took pictures to illustrate the order of assembly and erection and how to don the harness. That's why I did the demonstration in khakis and Wellington boots. I'd have lost them in a real snatch."*<sup>38</sup>

JACK had acquired another method to rescue of UN pilots downed over the Korean landmass. But, the system was retained by 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force and mounted in a detachable fuel tank under the wing of the commander's four-engine C-54 *Skymaster* transport. Even with air superiority, rescuing airmen from Communist-controlled areas with slow-flying transports and helicopters was very dangerous. While a C-54 could drop the system, it could not do the snatch and its loitering overhead only served to alert enemy forces to a

downed airman.<sup>39</sup> Helicopters were precious commodities in Korea. Primitive was a polite description of the VFR (visual flight rules) navigation capabilities in daylight. They had limited flight range and load capacity. Since the Red Chinese and North Koreans had none, helicopters were desirable targets for technology exploitation.<sup>40</sup> Despite these problems, aircrew recovery was a high priority military mission that JACK assumed to establish rapport with FEC.

The possible entrapment of UN air rescue elements was a constant that had to be closely weighed before committing non-expendable resources that might compound the situation. On 7 February 1952, the U.S. Navy lost an H-5 helicopter, its pilot, and an 8240<sup>th</sup> AU (LEOPARD BASE) officer trying to rescue a downed naval aviator. They joined the captured Navy pilot as POWs.<sup>41</sup> Subsequently, the 'Kyushu Gypsies' lost a C-46, aircrew, and 8240<sup>th</sup> AVIARY personnel when a double-agent threw a hand grenade inside as he jumped out. A B-26 *Invader*, a couple of pilots, and two 8240<sup>th</sup> officers were shot down during a reconnaissance mission. Low flying aircraft were vulnerable to massed ground fire.<sup>42</sup>

Shortly after returning to Korea, CPT Sadler was tasked to be mission commander for a pilot rescue. SFC Don Stephens volunteered to accompany him aboard the B-26 control aircraft. JACK had a radio report that one of their agent teams had gotten to a downed Navy pilot before the North Koreans and were requesting aircraft pick up. A name was provided and his ship had confirmed that he had been recently shot down. Background information was provided to verify his identity.<sup>43</sup>

*"When we got close to the location, I had the pilot fly a 'three-sixty' circle at about three thousand feet while I radioed the 'agent team' on the ground. I told them to put the American on the radio. As soon as he came on I began asking personal questions to confirm his identity. I was sure that it was an American talking and his answers were correct. I asked him to come outside of the hut so that I could see him talking on the radio. Then, we dropped down on the deck for a closer look. As we zoomed by in a banked attitude I could see that the speaker was definitely an American in a flight suit, but I was uneasy so I told him we'd make another pass. I switched to Volksdeutsch as we turned on final and asked if it was trap. He replied in country German that it was before being yanked back into the hut. Then, all hell broke loose. As we flew into a hail of ground fire our pilot rocked and twisted that bomber like a fighter plane to escape," recounted Sadler.*<sup>44</sup> *"We*



# Recovery Gone Awry

On 29 November 1952, a CIA affiliated *China Air Transport (CAT) C 47*, dispatched on a snatch recovery mission, was flown by two WWII Pacific fighter pilots, CPTs Norman H. Schwartz and Robert C. Snoddy. On board the C 47 transport were two CIA personnel, Richard G. Fecteau and John T. Downey, to operate

retrieval equipment. The mission went horribly awry when the ground team was compromised. This resulted in the deaths of the two pilots, and the capture of the two CIA personnel. The two captives were later released in the early 1970s as part of President Richard M. Nixon's diplomatic *rapprochement* with Communist China.



Marine Aviator Norman H. Schwartz,  
Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medals.



Navy pilot Robert C. Snoddy,  
Air Medals, Purple Heart, & 2 kills.



CIA Case officer Richard G. Fecteau, released  
from Chinese captivity, 1971.



CIA Case officer John T. Downey, released  
from Chinese captivity, 1973.



*were shot at but got away unhurt. CPT Sadler 'shut off' the inbound helicopter and cancelled the mission. That was a very close call," said SFC Stephens. "It happened so fast that I didn't get a chance to fire the machine guns."*<sup>45</sup>

On 29 November 1952, an intended snatch recovery of a Chinese agent from Manchuria turned into a debacle. An American-crewed CIA-affiliated, *China Air Transport* (CAT) C-47 was sent to airdrop supplies and the snatch system to recover the agent. Unbeknownst to the recovery personnel, their team on the ground had been compromised and turned. The promise of valuable intelligence carried by a courier was an effective lure. Approaching the pick-up trellis at close to stall speed, the C-47 flew into a cross fire from two well-camouflaged .50 cal. machine guns. The two men flying the transport were WWII Pacific fighter pilots. Norman H. Schwartz had been a Marine aviator [Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) & Air Medals (AM)] and Robert C. Snoddy [AMs, Purple Heart (PH) & 2 kills] a Navy pilot. The two managed a controlled crash, but died, trapped in the cockpit, when the C-47 caught fire. Two CIA case officers, aboard to operate the retrieval winch and recover the agent, survived unhurt. John T. Downey and Richard G. Fecteau were captured by Chinese security forces, tried, and imprisoned for twenty and nineteen years respectively.<sup>46</sup> President Richard M. Nixon's diplomatic *rapprochement* with Communist China was the catalyst that eventually opened the prison doors for these two CIA personnel.<sup>47</sup>

CPT Sadler recalled: "When this mission first came up, I told MAJ Singlaub, my boss, that I'd fly it. He made it very clear to me in no uncertain terms that his Air Ops officer was not going to be a part of that snatch mission. When I later learned that the C-47 had gone missing, presumed shot down, I thanked him. That two case officers had been permitted to go on a risky snatch recovery was unfathomable. Most of the case officers were inexperienced, recent college graduates with just enough training to be dangerous. Losing them was an intelligence officer's worst nightmare."<sup>48</sup> The shoot down of the C-47 recovery aircraft made it blatantly clear that a successful snatch recovery would be only by chance, making it an unacceptable risk.

What can be taken from JACK air operations during the Korean War? Money, advanced technologies, innovative techniques, and sheer determination, be damned. Simple, yet effective Communist North Korean and Chinese countermeasures overcame UN air superiority. Limited access to 1/25,000 topographical maps by JACK air delivery teams meant the responsibility for accurate parachute drops was relegated to rotating Air Force pilots whose night navigation skills using 1/250,000 air maps and first generation LORAN varied. Neither the C-46 *Commando* nor C-47 *Skytrain* was an all-weather transport aircraft. Using B-26 *Invader* light bombers as agent delivery platforms reduced shoot down possibilities, but the air navigation problems remained. WWII OSS-like "night" airdrops during full moon phases and the OSS snatch recovery system did not take into

account Communist systems of population control, internal security measures, the devastating effect of massed small arms fire, and the simple use of 'sky watchers' to ignite false signal fires to confuse aircrews. Compound the night flights with anti-aircraft artillery and searchlights and navigation went by the wayside. AVIARY Section of 8240<sup>th</sup> AU had these same problems and accomplished no more than did JACK Air. Compartmented operations precluded any sharing of experiences. Downed pilots and turned agents baited land traps for UN recovery aircraft and crews.

Because operational success cannot be measured by the quantity of airdrops, JACK air operations like AVIARY in 8240<sup>th</sup> AU did little to affect the outcome of the Korean War. While the number of aircrews, aircraft, and agents lost and quantity of supplies provided to the enemy outweighed benefits, the brave Air Ops men of JACK and AVIARY continued trying to make a difference. Despite the losses, recovery of downed airmen and prisoners of war (POW) has been a top priority mission for America's armed forces since WWII. There is an unspoken moral obligation accepted by American fighting men and women to do everything possible to free comrades in arms captured by the enemy or kidnapped U.S. citizens.

While advanced technology, air and naval superiority, and dedicated resources enabled air delivery of intelligence agents and supplies behind enemy lines in Korea, the purpose of that effort was not achieved. Operatives dropped to conduct sabotage, raids, and organize resistance simply disappeared within days without accomplishing anything except to serve as land bait for air rescue elements. The Allied-supported French resistance of WWII, the Special Forces model for guerrilla warfare was a unique 'cookie cutter' and totally inappropriate. The 'experiment' in Special Ops that JACK and the Army started during the Korea War would last well beyond the Vietnam War. ♣

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*Charles H. Briscoe has been the USASOC Command Historian since 2000. A graduate of The Citadel, this retired Army special operations officer earned his PhD from the University of South Carolina. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, in El Salvador, and the Lodge Act.*

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## Endnotes

- 1 Retired COL John K. Sadler, interviews by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 15 October 2003, 3 March 2011, 18 November 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **The typical case officer assigned to JACK was a recent college graduate with no military experience. Candidates spent three months in paramilitary classes before going to Training Camp 1, a hastily created CIA facility at Fort Benning, GA, for weapons and parachute training. Half of the recruits quit the program in training.** Sadler interview, 18 November 2011; retired MG John K. Singlaub, interview by Dr. Briscoe, 20 March 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Nicholas Dujmovic, "Drastic Actions Short of War: The Origins and Application of CIA's Covert Paramilitary Function in the Early Cold War," unpublished paper presented at the Society of Military Historians conference at Virginia Military Institute, 22 May 2010.
- 2 Singlaub interviews, 25 May 2011 and 20 March 2012.
- 3 Singlaub interview, 20 March 2012.
- 4 Singlaub interviews, 25 January 2008 and 23 May 2011.
- 5 **While it seemed that MAJ Singlaub 'shanghaied' Sadler, the 187<sup>th</sup> ARCT had an overage in captains because the West Point Class of 1949 had been**



- promoted *en masse* to Captain based on reduced time in grade criteria common in war. Retired LTG David E. Grange, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, April 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 6 Sadler interviews, 15 October 2003, 3 March 2011, and 18 November 2011; retired MG Kenneth A. Jolemore, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 11 February 2010, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; retired CW3 Oscar Johnson, Jr. interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 26 April 2011, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Donald H. Stephens, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 8 July 2005, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 7 Paul Diemert, "LORAN (Long Range Navigation)," 6 December 2011 @ [leagueofextraordinarytechnicians.wikispaces.com/LORAN=+Operation](http://leagueofextraordinarytechnicians.wikispaces.com/LORAN=+Operation), accessed 8/16/2012; "LORAN-A," [http://www.jproc.ca/hyperbolic/loran\\_a.html](http://www.jproc.ca/hyperbolic/loran_a.html), accessed 8/16/2012; Johnson interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 16 August 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 8 Jolemore interview, 11 February 2010.
- 9 Stanford University, "Long Range Navigation," <http://www.stanford.edu/research/oran.html>, accessed 8/27/2012.
- 10 "LORAN-A," [http://www.jproc.ca/hyperbolic/loran\\_a.html](http://www.jproc.ca/hyperbolic/loran_a.html); Diemert, "LORAN (Long Range Navigation)," 6 December 2011.
- 11 Central Intelligence Agency. Infiltration and Resupply of Agents in North Korea, 1952-1953, 33. Abbreviated copy provided by CIA, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 12 Jolemore interview, 15 February 2011.
- 13 Jolemore interview, 15 February 2011; CPT Daniel Nigro, a WWII Army Air Force R-6A (Nash-Kelvinator) helicopter pilot in the Pacific, flew a black B-26 Invader during the Korean War making agent airdrops behind enemy lines. The Air Force Reserve recall for Korea ended his part-time military flying career. Afterwards, Nigro became a career firefighter with the New York City Fire Department (NYCFD). His son, Daniel A. Nigro, was the Chief, NYCFD on 9/11 (11 September 2001). Daniel Nigro, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 12 December 2001, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date. "The C-47 that I used in 1952 never changed its color. Rather, its underbelly was painted black. Further engine exhaust extensions were installed that reduced its visibility to the ground observer." COL Douglas C. Dillard, OPERATION AVIARY: *Airborne Special Operations—Korea 1950-1953 and Tiger Hunters: Special Operations in Korea (Behind the Lines of the Chinese and North Korean Forces, 1950-1953)* (Breinigsville, PA: Xlibris, 2010), 15, 21-22.
- 14 Johnson interview, 26 April 2011.
- 15 Johnson interviews, 26 April 2011 and 15 August 2012. A blood chit that Air Force pilot LT William C. Slattery gave to a Korean family on 21 January 1951 to help him escape capture was redeemed sixteen years later. Jimmy W. Kilbourne, *Escape and Evasion: 17 True Stories of Downed Pilots Who Made It Back* (NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1973), 83-84.
- 16 Jolemore interviews, 11 and 15 February 2011.
- 17 Jolemore, interview, 15 February 2011.
- 18 Gene H. Rust, interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 21 September 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 19 Johnson interviews, 26 April 2011 and 15 August 2012.
- 20 Rust, interview, 21 September 2012.
- 21 Johnson interviews, 26 April 2011 and 15 August 2012.
- 22 Retired MAJ John W. MacDonald, interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 26 April 2011 and interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 6 August 2013, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; MacDonald letter to Briscoe, 3 August 2013.
- 23 Singlaub interview, 21 March 2012; retired MAJ Ivan G. Worrell, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 22 March 2012, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date.
- 24 In April 1952 AVIARY investigated the viability of jumping with a PAE (parachutist adjustable equipment) bag attached to his T-7 parachute harness. "I managed to scoot off the B-26 jump platform clearing the airplane. I fell like a rock until the parachute blossomed open. About a hundred feet above the ground I pulled the quick release knob to lower the bag so that it would land before me. Much to my misfortune it did not release. I barely managed to get my legs wrapped around it when we made a hard three-point contact with the ground—bag, butt, and head. That was a one-jump experiment," recalled SFC Kenneth A. Jolemore. Jolemore interview, 15 February 2011.
- 25 Sadler interview, 15 October 2003; Stephens interview, 8 July 2005. The initial wooden platform was replaced by one made of aluminum according to former SFC Kenneth A. Jolemore who used it in the AVIARY Section of 8240<sup>th</sup> AU. Jolemore interview, 15 February 2011; Dillard, OPERATION AVIARY, 9; Dillard, *Tiger Hunters*, 19.
- 26 Sadler interview 18 April 2012; Stephens interviews, 8 July 2005 and 17 May 2011 (Dr. Troy J. Sacquety); Singlaub interview, 21 March 2012; Jolemore interview, 15 February 2011.
- 27 Sadler interview 18 April 2012; Stephens interviews, 8 July 2005 and 17 May 2011; Singlaub interview, 21 March 2012.
- 28 Singlaub interview, 21 March 2012.
- 29 Sadler interview, 18 November 2011; Dujmovic, "Drastic Actions Short of War," 19.
- 30 Jolemore interview, 15 February 2011; Singlaub interview, 24 May 2011; Kilbourne, *Escape and Evasion*, 74; COL Albert W. Schintz, deputy commander, 51<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing, spent thirty-seven days on Taehwa-do off the northwest coast of Korea before being rescued. Dillard, OPERATION AVIARY, 58; Dillard, *Tiger Hunters*, 132.
- 31 "Man Pickup," Miscellaneous Branch and Specifications & Drawings Office, Equipment Laboratory, HQ, Air Technical Service Command, Area B – TSEPL-3H3, Wright Field, Dayton, OH, 1942, recovered by Michael Ravnitzky, [thememoryhole.org](http://thememoryhole.org), accessed 11 April 2012.
- 32 Sadler interview, 18 November 2011; Singlaub interviews, 21 March 2012 and 24 May 2011.
- 33 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011, 18 November 2011 and 18 April 2012.
- 34 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011, 18 November 2011 and 18 April 2012.
- 35 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011, 18 November 2011 and 18 April 2012. JACK rigger SFC Oscar Johnson, Jr. combined an Army T-7 parachute with an Air Force A-9 crew member parachute so that the airborne personnel could make free fall jumps. These were simply 'hop and pop' free fall jumps from twelve to fifteen hundred feet over the Han River sandbars. It was individual self-deployment of the personnel parachute instead of using an aircraft anchored static line parachute deployment. Making one of these free fall jumps garnered bragging rights. Johnson interview, 15 August 2012.
- 36 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011, 18 November 2011 and 18 April 2012.
- 37 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011, 18 November 2011 and 18 April 2012.
- 38 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011, 18 November 2011 and 18 April 2012.
- 39 Sadler interview, 3 March 2011.
- 40 Dillard, *Tiger Hunters*, 104-105, source cited as MG V.A. Zolotarev, V.A. Yaremenko, A.N. Pochtarev, and A.V. Usikov, "Russia (USSR) in Local Wars and Regional Conflicts in The Second Half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century," Moscow, 2000, <http://www.korean-war.com/russianregionalconflicts.html> accessed 2/26/2013.
- 41 Retired BG Joseph Ulatoski, 7 March 2011, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter cited by name and date; Dillard, OPERATION AVIARY, 83; Dillard, *Tiger Hunters*, 101-103.
- 42 Worrell interview, 22 March 2012; Dillard, OPERATION AVIARY, 39-43; Dillard, *Tiger Hunters*, 87-89, 90-93.
- 43 Sadler interview, 3 March 2011; Stephens interview, 17 May 2011.
- 44 Sadler interview, 3 March 2011; Stephens interview, 17 May 2011.
- 45 Stephens interview, 17 May 2011.
- 46 Frederick W. Cleaver, George Fitzpatrick, John Ponturo, William Rossiter, and C. Darwin Stolzenbach, *UN Partisan Warfare in Korea, 1951-1954 (U)*, Technical Memorandum ORO-T-64 (AFPE)(Chevy Chase, MD: Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University, June 1956), 93; "Remembering CIA's Heroes: Norman Schwartz & Robert Snoddy" at <https://www.cia.gov/news-information/featured-story-archive/2007-featured-story-archive/s>, accessed 8/1/2012; "Two CIA Prisoners in China, 1952-73" at <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/>, accessed 8/1/2012.
- 47 From a Chinese Prison to a Director's Medal: A Journey that Defines Extraordinary Fidelity; The Story of Richard Fecteau and John Downey, The Center for the Study of Intelligence DVD (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2010).
- 48 Sadler interviews, 3 March 2011 and 18 November 2011.



# The 8240th Army Unit (AU) Recognized

## Eighth United States Army (EUSA) Guerrilla Command

Before the undeclared war in Korea began on 25 June 1950, resistance movements in North Korea had already begun forming anti-Communist paramilitary organizations. Operating independently in and around their respective districts, these groups either went underground or fled south at the start of the war. Reemerging in the fall of 1950 during the UN drive to the Yalu River, they retreated when China intervened. In January 1951, the Eighth U. S. Army (EUSA) created guerrilla command, headed by Colonel (COL) John H. McGee. Besides his "Organization and Plan for Partisan Operations in Korea," COL McGee provided a command structure with communications, training, and security elements and specifics for operating a guerrilla base. As selected units matured, their cadre was taught advanced skills like sabotage, demolitions, communications, and parachuting by U. S. Army paratroopers and Ranger advisors.

COL McGee also commanded the Tactical Liaison Office (TLO) comprised of small American officer and enlisted teams who escorted and retrieved Korean 'agents' collecting tactical intelligence forward of the UN front lines. Redesignated as the 8240th Army Unit (AU) in October 1951, The EUSA Guerrilla Command was the first unit to employ individual Special Forces-trained officers and NCOs in combat. Ninety-nine graduates of the Special Forces Course were sent to Korea beginning in March 1953, just a few months before the Armistice.

Today, almost sixty years after the end of open hostilities, the EUSA Guerrilla Command remains cloaked in organizational and operational mythology

and controversy. Long-standing security classification of its activities, reorganizations, name changes, and the lack of operations documentation contributed heavily. The most commonly used name, 8240th, is misleading because it came about on 26 July 1951. That was six months after the EUSA Guerrilla Command was created. The guerrillas were not transferred to the 8240th until December 1951. Other US, UN, and Korean elements involved in guerrilla operations were often confused with '8240' as well.

On 15 June 2012, the 8240th AU was recognized by the representative of Korea for war service. Mr. Yongjin Jeon, Department of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, Republic of Korea, honored those who served in the 8240th AU with a memorial stone at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville, North Carolina and the American veterans of this unit were awarded the Korean Peace Medal. ▲



Mr. Yongjin Jeon, Department of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, Republic of Korea.



Partisan Honor Medal





Commander, USASOC  
ATTN: AOHS (*Veritas*)  
E-2929 Desert Storm Drive  
Fort Bragg, NC 28310

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#### **The 41st Civil Affairs Company in Vietnam Part II: 1968-1970**

*by Troy J. Sacquety*

Arriving in South Vietnam in 1965, the 41st Civil Affairs Company provided more than sixteen six-man teams throughout three of the country's four Corps areas of responsibility. Usually operating independently and selecting the projects they would undertake, the 41st teams performed a significant number of humanitarian assistance tasks that were instrumental in increasing the Vietnamese government's legitimacy and stature among its rural area populations.

### **The 5th Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company**

#### **A Tactical Psywar Asset for the Seventh Army**

*by Jared M. Tracy*

Assigned to Germany in the Fall of 1951, the 5th L&L provided tactical Psywar support for the Seventh Army. Prohibited from conducting direct Psywar campaigns against Communist bloc nations and their armed forces, the 5th L&L learned and practiced its trade in numerous Seventh Army and European Command (EUCOM) exercises. Despite shortages of supplies and equipment, the 5th L&L was an active part of the U. S. forces in Europe at the height of the Cold War.

### **The Sixth Ranger Company**

#### **Europe's Cold Warriors**

*by Eugene G. Piasecki*

Formed in November 1950, the 6th Ranger Infantry Company (Airborne) [RICA] was activated at Fort Benning, Georgia's Ranger Training Center, convinced their next assignment would be to conduct combat Ranger operations in Korea. As the Rangers soon discovered, the U. S. Army had other plans, and instead the 6th RICA was ordered to Germany as part of the Cold War deterrent to Communist expansion. They remained in Europe during their entire existence and were the last RICA to be disbanded in December 1951.